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ABSTRACT

Papers are presented which were generated by this workshop on school improvement. Both session and panel presentations are included on school effectiveness research, curriculum alignment for school improvement, a school climate improvement project, the McRel school improvement program, Pennsylvania's long-range planning for school improvement, an alternative school, and using research in an elementary school. Handouts to the session presentations are included. (JD)

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# SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: CLIMATE, GOALS, AND LEADERSHIP

## Summary and Proceedings of a 1982 Regional Exchange Workshop

Shirley Anderson, ESO Intern
Jefferson-Louisville School District, Kentucky

AEL Occasional Paper 009

Appalachia
Educational
Laboratory

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- documenting educational problems of the Region and sharing the information both with member states and other R&D producers;
- identifying R&D products potentially useful for solving the documented problems and sharing information about these with member states;
- providing R&D technical assistance and training, which may include adapting existing R&D products, to lessen documented problems of the Region: and
- continuing to produce R&D projects of national significance in the areas of Lifelong Learning, School/Family Relations, Basic Skills, and others that may be identified.

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# SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: CLIMATE, GOALS, AND LEADERSHIP

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Shirley Anderson, ESO Intern
Jefferson-Louisville School District, Kentucky

January 1983

Educational Services Office
Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc.
Charleston, West Virginia

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Carolyn Luzader
Editor/Research Assistant
Educational Services Office

# INTRODUCTION

The Appalachia Educational Laboratory (AEL) was created in 1966 for the purpose of bringing the results of educational research and development to bear on the improvement of school practice in its Region. AEL is one of eight such Regional Educational Laboratories (REL's) across the country and its founding was made possible by Congressional authority.

The REL's may be viewed as "linking pins" between their respective Region's educational practitioners and the educational research and development community. This linkage is two directional in that practitioners gain access to new knowledge, products, and programs of developers; and researchers and developers learn about R&D needs of educators. Each REL is established to serve a particular region of the United States. AEL's member states are: Alabama, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. The states of Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina receive services only from AEL's Regional Exchange program.

One office of AEL, the Educational Services Office (ESO), has primary responsibility for providing the Laboratory's R&D services to the Region. These services are provided through two programs housed in ESO--Regional Exchange (Rx) and Regional Services (RS). The workshop for which these proceedings are written was one of two regional workshops sponsored by the Rx in 1982.

The Rx program is part of the Research and Development Exchange (RDx), a nationwide network of REL's and university-based R&D centers. The RDx mission is to promote the exchange of information in all areas of education among researchers, developers, and practitioners. AEL's Rx is particularly interested in promoting educators' use of research-based information about school improvement efforts. The Exchange provides computer searches, information referrals, and resource materials through the Resource and Referral Center. Additionally, the Exchange provides regional and in-state workshops with local followup to support dissemination and school improvement efforts.

This 1982 Rx workshop topic was initially identified by the ESO Advisory Committee as part of the Rx efforts to link research with practice. The workshop focused on school effectiveness and was held at the Charleston Civic Center, June 7-9. It provided over 125 participants a variety of sessions on improving schools.

The workshop began with an overview of the research on school effectiveness. This was followed by a day of concurrent sessions that dealt with school climate, curriculum alignment, and a school improvement project that's based on the effective schools research. On the last day, a panel of educators from state, local, and intermediate agencies addressed some of the problems, issues, and answers related to implementing school improvement projects. The workshop concluded with a verbal synthesis of the two days' sessions. Appendix A contains the workshop agenda, objectives, and a brief description of each of the programs.

# SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

by Dr. Susan T. Everson

For the last 10 to 12 years, studies have been designed to look inside buildings, inside classrooms, and to begin showing characteristics that exist in some buildings and not in others--characteristics that make a difference in the academic success of the students in those schools.

*Researchers found characteristics in the more academically effective classrooms and buildings that did not exist in the less effective ones.*

Researchers found that even though schools had the same levels of teacher certification, the same kinds of students, same number of books in the library, etc., there were differences in academic results. Some schools are more effective than others.

The same thing was true at the classroom level. We look at classrooms, and we say, "Oh, I know the classroom down the hall where every year the students coming out of that classroom are doing better than they are in other classrooms."

Researchers observed those classrooms and school buildings to describe what it is that occurs in those buildings and in those classrooms that makes the difference.

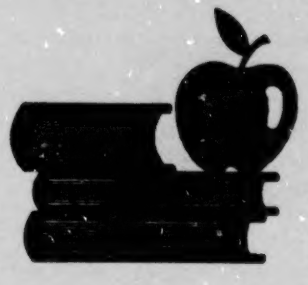
*Practitioners are delighted to know that all of this research wasn't developed in some laboratory by some people in a dark room.*

Researchers found characteristics in the more academically effective classrooms and buildings that did not exist in the less effective ones. There was a group of characteristics that emerged, and researchers found that all of these characteristics had to be present for the school to be the more effective school. In other words, four out of five characteristics weren't enough. I want to point out that this research is descriptive research. We're not talking about theory. I find that as I work with teachers, administrators, and state education agency people, they are delighted to know that all of this research wasn't developed in some laboratory by some people in a dark room who came out and said, "This is what you should be doing."

It's descriptive of good school practice in real school buildings and real classrooms with real teachers and real students. There are some flaws in that, because we can't say if you do this, that will occur. But there is enough in the body of research so that we can say that there's a pretty good chance that if all of these characteristics are present in your school, you're going to begin seeing some results in student outcomes.

*An effective school is a school where children or students from all socioeconomic levels have an equal chance to succeed.*

Before we go any further, I want to define "effective" as it relates to schools. I think that's a term we throw around quite frequently, and if we all wrote down our definitions right now, I think we would see many different definitions. In Ron Edmonds' research, an effective school is a school where children or students from all socioeconomic levels have an equal chance to succeed. And what that means is that the proportion of low income kids in the school succeed at a mastery level equal to the proportion of middle and high income kids that succeed in that mastery level. As an example, we'll say that 80 percent of your students in a school are middle and high income kids, and 20 percent are low income level. Of that 80 percent, 50 percent of those kids meet a mastery level or above. That means 50 percent of the low income kids (the other 20 percent) must meet that mastery level as well. It doesn't mean everybody is functioning at the exact same level. There is a minimum level, above which proportionally low, middle, and high income students perform.



While that is a demanding standard, remember that there are schools across this country that are meeting that definition. A couple of weeks ago in Kansas City, I heard Ron Edmonds say it beautifully, "Don't tell me those kids can't learn. I'll show you a school where they are learning!"

*"Don't tell me those kids can't learn. I'll show you a school where they are learning!"*

And so for the next two days, I advocate a look at this research, looking at effectiveness in a way that helps all students, not just a portion of the kids that are in school. Another point is that this isn't research about an add-on program; it isn't something else you have to do after school or during lunch. What you will hear focuses on good organizational practice--simply that.

Let's move to an overview of this research. At McREL we've organized this research into three areas. This is McREL organization, and this is not the way it comes out in research reports. As we looked at it, we found that if we put this information into three main areas, we could pretty well find a place for everything. Interestingly, when I looked at the program that is planned for these two days, it fits beautifully.

The first area is the area of Teaching. Teaching is everything that happens in the classroom. It's the instruction that goes on, and we'll talk about that in just a minute.

The second area is Curriculum Assessment Relationship. And interestingly, you will have a three hour session on that with Dr. Roger Scott from Southwest Regional Laboratory. At McREL, we happen to base a lot of our work on SWRL's work. They were the ones who really pushed us off and got us started in that area. So I will talk about curriculum and assessment, how that affects schools, and the relationship of that to achievement.

*Using this research requires a reexamination of such things as the way educators manage time, assign students, define the curriculum, determine class size, organize schools, and assess achievement.*

The third area is Building Level Leadership or Organization. And of course, you're going to have a session with Gene Howard on school climate at the building level, and that fits beautifully. So I will show you now the overview of those three areas.

Educators have always looked for ways to improve schools. And anyone who has visited a classroom recently knows that there have been dramatic changes in schools over the past few decades. The stereotypic vision many critics have of education is simply not a correct image of most contemporary schools. Just as fast as improvements have been made, new demands are placed on schools and new improvements are required. The cycle is never ending, and it is the mark of today's educators that they are constantly on the watch for ways they can improve instruction for everyone.

For the next several minutes, I'll present information about recent research findings that offer opportunities for school improvement in the immediate future. Some of the research is quite new. It provides a practical common sense approach to education for teachers and administrators. Using this research, however, requires a reexamination of such things as the way educators manage time, assign students, define the curriculum, determine class size, organize schools, and assess achievement. For over 30 years, our way of doing things has changed little. Recent research argues for a reexamination of these traditional elements of schooling.

*Just as a physicist has recently discovered elements of matter below the unit of the atom, we need more precise ways of defining educational concepts.*

Just as a physicist has recently discovered elements of matter below the unit of the atom, we need more precise ways of defining educational concepts. And if we do that, we believe many of the current problems we now face can be successfully resolved. Time doesn't permit an examination of every area, so to make the point, I'm going to focus on three areas--and these are the same three I have just mentioned: Teaching, Curriculum and Assessment, and Building Level or School Level Management.

## Teaching

Today I will look at just one aspect of each of these areas. For example, in the area of teaching, we will look at time management, and we will draw on only one of several studies that point to the need to reexamine our traditional concept about time usage in the schools.

***Not only were differences found from one school building to another, but in the same school, there were tremendous differences in the amount of time devoted to subjects.***

The research we will draw on comes from the Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study (BTES) carried out by the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development. The traditional concept of time is what BTES calls assigned time. That is simply the amount of time devoted to something: four years of secondary education, 36 weeks to ninth grade general science, or two hours a day to second grade reading. BTES has shown that there is not only considerable variation in how much time one teacher or school devotes to something like reading, but more importantly, a great deal of the amount of time assigned or dedicated to that activity is lost. And here I want to point out that not only were the differences found from one school building to another, but in the same school, there were tremendous differences in the amount of time devoted to subjects.

Sometimes as little as one-quarter of the school day is used for academic learning. And I'm going to show you now how we come to that conclusion. BTES supports this conclusion by breaking the concept of time into three elements: (1) assigned time is the concept I've just mentioned to you; (2) engaged time I'll discuss now; and (3) a third element we'll turn to in just a moment.

***Sometimes as little as one-quarter of the school day is used for academic learning.***

Engaged time is the portion of assigned time that a student appears to be studying or actually learning. And that's exactly what it is. That's what the observers watch. They watch students, and they check off when the students are doing what the teacher assigned. Students can be involved in academic activity and not be engaged. They have to be doing what is assigned at the time. If it looks like the student is involved, they are checked off as engaged in the task at hand. It's that simple.

Engaged time varies considerably for each student. Note that engaged time is not always related to the amount of assigned time. There are students who use every minute that we've given them to do what we've asked. Others are not so highly engaged.

Engaged time is still not enough, and that's where I think we're beginning to realize there's more to this time matter than we've thought. BTES researchers found that there was another element. They called it ALT (Academic Learning Time). That concept is defined as engagement plus a student success rate of approximately 60 to 90 percent. Now that sounds complicated. I want to take just a minute to tell you that it is not that complicated.

***If students experience too low a rate of success, they become frustrated and bored.***

Success rate is simply the number of right answers out of opportunities to answer for each student. That includes written and oral answers. So, for example, a student may have ten chances to answer a question and he/she answers correctly eight times. That student, for that time, has an 80 percent success rate. Now, a one time success rate tells you little. We're talking here about a continuous rate over time. In order for ALT to occur, you've got to have a student succeeding between 60 and 90 percent of the time. Ideally, 80 to 85 percent is what you hope for. That's what we work for with our teachers.

BTES found that if students experience too low a rate of success, i.e., if they were successful only 10 to 40 percent of the time, they became frustrated and bored. They were doing no better than chance and probably did not master the task. In fact, what the research says is: if students are unsuccessful more than 60 percent of the time (in other words, if they have a success rate less than 40 percent), they have a negative relationship to learning the task at hand.

***If the students are very successful, succeeding more than 90-95 percent of the time, they also become bored.***

If the students are very successful, the other end of the continuum, succeeding say more than 90-95 percent of the time (and remember we're not talking about a daily rate, but over time), they also become bored. They start making careless errors and stop attending. We know that for gifted and talented kids the dropout rate is high. We also can think of students who say, "I've done 5 of those math problems, and they're right. Why should I have to do the other 25?" They piddle around, they don't attend, and they are bored.

Again, there is much variation from one student to another in terms of Academic Learning Time. Also please note that, again, it is not directly related to engaged time or assigned time.

ALT is simply a mathematical equation. A high engagement rate plus an appropriate success rate equals ALT. If you look at it that way, it's easy to remember.

***I think we wonder all the time how we can reach low achieving kids. We can reach those kids if we can adjust the ALT for them.***

ALT is important because it has the highest relationship to academic success, higher than assigned time or engaged time. ALT was so significant that BTES found that a student who started at the 16th percentile and received only 100 minutes of ALT in reading made little progress during a five-week period. But a student who's ALT was dramatically altered after receiving 1,500 minutes (that's only 54 minutes a day over five weeks) moved from the 16th to the 36th percentile in reading during a five-week period. In other words, with the lower achieving students they could dramatically raise reading scores in five weeks by adjusting the ALT. And that's an incredible finding. I think we wonder all the time how we can reach low achieving kids. We can reach those kids if we can adjust the ALT for them.

The question I know that's on your mind is, "Okay, that's all well and good, but how do you do that?" Well, the research doesn't tell you that. It doesn't say, "Well, if this is what you want, these are the six things that you need to do." But you can read it and there are inferences in there. Classrooms are described where ALT rates are high. The reader can begin to see that in those classrooms certain things are in place.

Some of you were here last year when there was a workshop on classroom management. That happens to be one of the things that affects ALT. At McREL, we looked at areas that seemed to have an effect on ALT. I'd like to show you what they are.

***You can decrease class disruptions through careful staff coordination allowing children every minute assigned to effectively carry out their responsibilities.***

First, a simple one. You should examine your schedule to maximize the amount of Adademic Learning Time available, particularly at the secondary level. Some of the high school teachers say, "I can't get everything taught in 55-minute periods." Well, there's no magic in a 55-minute period, and it may be that the schedule alone is keeping you from having a higher ALT rate.

Second, you can decrease class disruptions through careful staff coordination allowing children every minute assigned to effectively carry out their responsibilities. This has to do with the nurse coming to the door saying, "I'd like John Smith, please" and everybody's head going up; the squawk box; and Title I interruptions. An effort is made to get that problem organized and minimized. One school I worked with, for example, has now scheduled all of their assemblies for next year. They will meet at the end of the day on a specific day each month, so that there isn't any question about interrupting important times when the students are supposed to be doing some other things.

Third, and this is an important one to a lot of people, you can decrease time lost to disciplinary activities. Every oral reprimand results in time lost to the corrected student, time lost for the teacher to help others, and time lost as other students' attention is distracted.

*Every oral reprimand results in time lost to the corrected student, time lost for the teacher to help others, and time lost as other students' attention is distracted.*

Fourth, students' attention can be increased by using motivational techniques, such as those that come from good ideas of other teachers. This happens to be an area in which people are very interested. You'll have people say, "My students don't cause me any trouble, but they sit there like bumps on a log. I cannot get them interested." We've found some very good material, and it's based on research. One of those, my favorite, is from Johns Hopkins University: Teams, Games, and Tournaments (TGT)--or Student Team Learning.

Fifth is classroom organization. You have had a workshop on this. It's known to be a critical factor in student engagement. For example, Carolyn Evertson, has shown that the way a teacher begins the school year is crucial to student engagement and achievement throughout the year.

Sixth, student success rate, a component of Academic Learning Time, can be increased by improving a student's expectations of success. For example, research suggests that many teachers subconsciously signal low expectations for some students. These expectations in turn result in lower achievement.

Finally, proper diagnosis of student learning problems can lead to increased achievement by helping teachers prescribe instructional activities that individual students need most.

*Norm-referenced testing does not tell us how effective our instructional techniques are, and unfortunately, it's been used for that purpose.*

## Curriculum and Assessment

A second element of schooling that needs to be rethought has to do with the relationship of testing to the curriculum. For example, let's focus on the questions of whether standardized tests are an appropriate way to judge the effectiveness of schools. And I want to stop and make sure you understood what I just said. Norm-referenced testing does not tell us how effective our instructional techniques are, and unfortunately, it's been used for that purpose. You know that the public sometimes tells us about how well we're doing based on recent test scores. I'm saying that these tests do not give us an assessment strategy for individual school effectiveness.

*Thirty to forty percent of the items on leading tests are not covered by the leading commercial textbooks at the same grade level.*

A traditional model of school assessment equates tests, and norm-referenced tests in particular, with school achievement. Although some schools use less traditional methods, almost all have their students tested annually on commercial, nationally-normed tests. Well, there's a problem with that.

First, there's good evidence that a great deal of the tests' content isn't taught. A recent analysis by the Institute for Research on Teaching has shown that 30 to 40 percent of the items on leading tests are not covered by the leading commercial textbooks at the same grade level. Further, in reading, students have to possess vocabularly and use vocabulary that is introduced in grade levels ahead in order to come out at norm on the norm-referenced test.

Now of course, the problem is more serious if you assume that the textbook is the principal vehicle of instruction. And in fact, surveys indicate that the majority of teachers are guided primarily by the textbook, not by their own or the district's curriculum guide. Assuming then that teachers don't cover all the items covered by leading tests, we can't underestimate the effects of non-school influences on test success. Students with more non-school sources of academic learning will always do better on norm-referenced tests if they do not accurately measure the instruction in their school.

*A norm-referenced testmaker works to make sure a good test item averages failure by about half the students.*

Another problem with using norm-referenced tests for school evaluation is that these test items are explicitly designed so that only half the students pass. That is to ensure that the students' scores are distributed across the normal curve. A norm- referenced testmaker works to make sure a good test item averages failure by about half the students. And to accomplish this they deliberately make some items artificially difficult. And, as a result, these items don't accurately measure the effect of instruction.

We must reexamine the traditionally accepted methods of evaluating students in schools. And if we do, we can expect to show results. A better alignment of what we test with what we teach will produce a clear picture of the effectiveness of schools and instruction.

## Building Level Management

*They measured the amount of emphasis placed on academics, . . . appropriate use of rewards, . . .*

Finally, let's turn to one other area to make the point, the area of school building management. A recent study from England presents some powerful information about how effective schools can be and what makes them effective. I'm talking here about 15,000 Hours, a study of secondary schools. We also can look at the work of Ron Edmonds, Larry Lezotte, and others. They found characteristics of effective elementary schools. The study I shall discuss is called 15,000 Hours, because that's approximately the number of hours a student spends in Britain's schools. The study is important to us, because it reexamines the theory that outside factors are more important for determining learning than schools--such things as economic and family background, language experience, and prior learning. The study looks beyond the usual measures of schools, such as the amount of money spent. the number of books in the library, the degrees the teachers have, the newness and stylishness of buildings, and the way we group students and determine class size. And these, by the way, are the measures most previous studies have used to detemine what makes schools most effective. It should not be surprising to us that many of these studies have labeled schools ineffective. Instead, 15,000 Hours researchers looked at what went on in classrooms and school buildings. They measured or observed the amount of emphasis placed on academics, the consistency with which common goals are shared by teachers and communicated to students, teacher engagement in students' learning, appropriate use of rewards, and the degree to which students participated and shared in the responsibility in the schools. Schools that did well in these dimensions of schooling together produced higher student achievement scores, fewer discipline problems, and better attendance rates. These aspects of schooling are so powerful that subsequent research has shown they can significantly reduce the effect of socioeconomic backgrounds and language experience.

*The fancy newness of the building didn't make a difference; but how clean, orderly, and safe it was did make a difference.*

The characteristics that Edmonds found are very similar, and I want to give you those five characteristics. First, in the area of school climate, they found that the fancy newness of the building didn't make a difference; but how clean, orderly, and safe it was did make a difference. So having a building built in 1980 wasn't going to help you unless it was clean, orderly, and safe--a nice place for students to be.

Second, there was an academic leader in every building. And most often it was the principal, but it didn't have to be the principal. There was an academic or instructional leader. Basically, that is a person who looks at his or her job as one of curriculum and instruction first and foremost. This is a difficult thing to take on, and it will be a new focus for some of us.

*It wasn't that these people were always looking for innovation and new programs, but they simply would not live with the status quo.*

Third, teacher expectations were high in these schools. And I think it's interesting to know how the researchers did this research. They didn't go in and ask teachers how they felt about kids or school. What the researchers did was observe teaching behaviors. They watched teachers teach, and then they talked with the students about the work they had to do.

Fourth, effective schools had a monitoring system. That sounds difficult; it really isn't. Basically, when teachers get the test results, they spend their time looking for areas of weakness and strength so that improvements can be made in needed areas. It wasn't that these people were always looking for innovation and new programs, but they simply would not live with the status quo. They moved on to improve those areas that they saw as weak.

The fifth characteristic focuses on shared goals. School population consensus of the academic goals in the schools is critically important for effectiveness. Agreed upon, common focus is the issue.

*Researchers have shown that it is the sub-elements of schooling that make the difference and not the number of degrees the teacher has, or the number of books in the library.*

In closing, the point I'm trying to make is that these elements are not the traditional ways in which we have measured the quality of schools. And yet, researchers have shown that it is the sub-elements of schooling that make the difference and not the number of degrees the teacher has, or the number of books in the library. We need to find new ways of operationalizing the concept of school management. And building level leadership must be much more carefully tied to these new elements than limited to the traditional function of the principal's office.

Let's close this presentation by emphasizing the two things that I've been trying to say. First, what goes on in a school does make a difference, but the old ways of defining the "what" are now inadequate. Second, research is pointing to new ways we can increase effectiveness. For example, if we increase the amount of ALT, if we improve the articulation between what we teach and what we test, and if we work to create better building level leadership and organization, we should be able to produce some dramatic gains in student achievement. We think that if these improvements are made now, the effort will help to resolve many of the current attacks on education. Many people see these attacks as attacks on schools and educators. We prefer to think they reflect the need to reexamine the way we have described schools. If we use research to redefine education, we can have better schools now.

# CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT AS A MODEL FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

by Dr. Roger Scott

What is curriculum alignment? Basically, it's an idea: student learning will be most successful when the three elements of the curriculum are aligned. The three parts of the curriculum are: instructional intents (our objectives), classroom instruction, and assessment. We must know where we are headed, classroom instruction must be aligned with these goals, and we must have an assessment system that measures what we are expecting the students to learn.

### Objectives

One of the things that I have been preaching for a long time is that we must start with objectives. We must know where we are going before we can get there. Most school districts have taken some steps to define what it is the students are expected to learn.

### Assessment

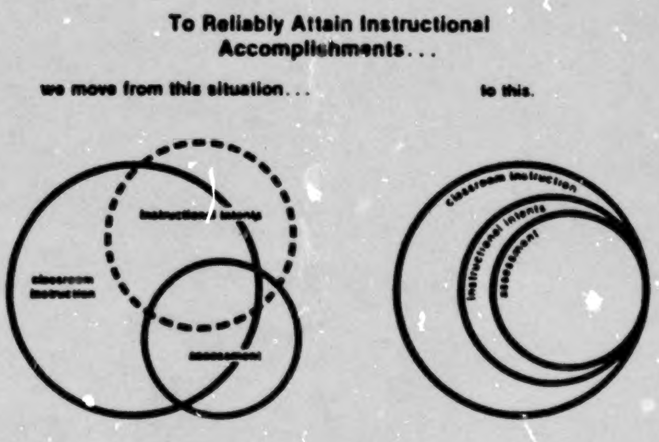
Then there are the tests, and what do they typically test? They test some strange things. It is evident that they do not necessarily test what we are trying to teach. The technology of norm-referenced tests attempts to distribute the students according to a bell-shaped "normal" curve. Often we have an assessment system that does not match our objectives. It tests some of the things that are our objectives, but there are other objectives that it does not test at all. And it tests things for which schools do not have responsibility or cannot control. There are a lot of socioeconomic factors, language factors, and just general out-of-school learning that is being assessed on these tests.

### Classroom Instruction

Classroom instruction typically focuses only on some of the districts' objectives for what the students should learn. And the classroom instruction only covers some of what is being assessed. It also includes a lot that is not a school's objective and a lot that is not measured. One result of this situation: teachers are not getting credit for a lot of the teaching which they are doing.

***Curriculum alignment is a principle that says if instructional accomplishments are to be reliably obtained, three things must line up: the objectives, the testing system, and the classroom instruction.***

The diagram shown below illustrates curriculum misalignment and curriculum alignment. This is a way to visualize what we are moving towards. There is a circle representing instructional intents or the objectives. Then there are circles representing assessment and classroom instruction. When these are moved together, we see the circles are not the same size. The objectives represent our list of what is most important to teach the students. We do not have to test the whole universe of instructional intents. We can test a reasonable sample of those things to find out how well we are doing. Therefore, this circle is smaller. Classroom instruction should give the students the opportunity to learn all of the intentions we have for student achievement, but it should do more than that. That is why the classroom instruction circle is bigger.


To Reliably Attain Instructional Accomplishments...
we move from this situation...
to this.
instructional intents
classroom instruction
assessment
classroom instruction
instructional intents
assessment

Achieving Curriculum Alignment

How can school administrators and teachers go about the task of aligning a curriculum? Based upon our work with the Los Angeles Unified School District and a number of other districts throughout the nation, alignment efforts can be described as a four-step process.

Step 1 - Awareness of Instructional Objectives

Teachers and administrators need to know what it is that they are responsible for teaching. Los Angeles has an extensive list of essential skills to be taught at each grade level. We have found it useful to ask teachers to not only survey these objectives, but to work together and identify some objectives that need extra attention during the school year. We say, "You are responsible for all of these objectives, but let's look at some things about which you are particularly concerned. An important way of setting these priorities is to find out how well the students are doing on the objectives." How can teachers find out? A good test will tell them; a test that matches the objectives. Fortunately, Los Angeles did have such a test, called the Survey of Essential Skills (SES). It matches very well with the grade-by-grade objectives.

Using the SES data from the previous spring, teachers could, at the beginning of the year, review how well things went last year in their instructional program. They could see their disappointments, but also they could be particularly proud of their achievements. Quite a bit different use of data than what we typically find.*

In Los Angeles, principals, as well as teachers, found some interesting payoffs in this activity. The principals must submit a school plan every year, and some of them started saying, "If I put all these lists of accomplishments and concerns together, and wrote a little descriptive piece about how they fit, I might have my school plan pretty much done, and I could legitimately tell the superintendent that the teachers were really involved in this plan."

The principals also found another use for the objectives that we didn't anticipate. At PTA meetings they began saying, "Our teachers have conscientiously analyzed where your children are as far as instruction is concerned and we have some things that we are particularly pleased about; how well your children did and how well our efforts helped the students achieve. Our students in general were very good in these areas," and they would describe a few of the areas.

Then they would say things like, "But we have some concerns. Our business is instruction and the students aren't doing well in certain areas, and we want to enlist your support as parents in these areas. We are going to do our best to improve the areas about which we are particularly concerned." Then they give an operational definition of some of the main areas of concern, particularly the ones that tracked across grade levels.

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*Editor's Note: At this point the workshop participants were divided into groups representing 4th and 5th grade teachers. The groups worked from the Survey of Essential Skills data to practice identifying skill areas for which the student performance was particularly good and areas which were of special concern, partly because of low scores.

This process is also useful from a district administrative standpoint. It can be used to focus instructional support for the schools. Instead of having a wide range of support services (everybody's trying to do everything for everybody), there can be an identification of areas which seem to deserve extra help. When you look at data from a district standpoint or in terms of clumps of schools within a school district, certain problems stand out. There can then be a focus on instructional support.

The objective writing by curriculum committees and the development of tests is one common strategy for Step 1, but there is an alternate way to approach this task. Remember, the first step is to consider where we are going in instruction, for what are we responsible as teachers, and how are we going to set some priorities.

The alternative strategy is particularly appropriate for schools that are not satisfied with their objectives for student learning and who don't have the resources to build their own tests.

First, a little background. We have been analyzing textbooks for a number of years, and it is interesting what is found in textbooks and what cannot be found. We started with mathematics and reading at the elementary school levels. We analyzed textbooks in terms of the critical skills (which we call "benchmarks").

Our criteria for analyzing the textbook were:

- all major textbooks devote at least three percent of the page content to a particular skill area; and
- the skill area must be important for success the next year.

In Appendix C, No. 1, there is an abbreviated list of reading and mathematics benchmark skills. The x's signify where a skill is a benchmark at a grade level. Using these benchmark skills to define learning objectives is an alternative strategy for Step 1, particularly since assessment materials that match these benchmarks have been developed.*

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*Editor's Note: SWRL has developed the Proficiency Verification System, available in mathematics and reading for grades 1-6.

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Composition

Question: Are you saying that if a district wanted to begin to align the program, that they may begin with something like this?

Answer: Yes. I think it beats forming a curriculum objective committee and working for a year to try to reinvent the wheel.

Question: I'm wondering if just a listing of items that have been taught should occur first. For example, one of the things which we request is that teachers write down what they teach. We don't care what textbook they use, because what they teach is the real curriculum.

Answer: Is what they teach much different from the textbook they use?

Question: At times, yes. Everything that they teach is not in the textbook. It is in some textbook, but not in a textbook.

Answer: That would give you a handle on how much change might be needed.

Question: And that way you can make a textbook fit what you teach, rather than teach what you find in textbooks.

Answer: Yes, but I think the problem with that is, if you are picking a textbook that matches what people say they are expecting to teach in their lesson plans that they use every year, you risk not covering very well some of these areas that are significant for success next year. For example, if the student moves out of the district to another district, certain things are going to payoff for some students because some skills occur in every textbook. There are the high payoff areas in every textbook, and you want to make sure you cover those. I think the question is, "Where do you start?" or "On what do you validate it?"

We worked with a large urban school district (not Los Angeles, but another one), and we talked about the benchmark skills. But they decided that they would redesign their curriculum based upon a standardized test. That makes absolutely no sense. They should start with "What do kids really need to succeed in life, both in school and out of school?"

Question: I guess my question has to do with how to determine what the content authority list of skill areas should be. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics has a content authority list. The different textbook publishers have their authority list on which they base the textbooks. There are programs which have different authority lists. Which is the right one? Which is the list? That is the fundamental problem with which we wrestle; because if we could come up with a content authority list that was in fact comprehensive and did represent what students should know, it would solve one of our major problems.

Answer: Sure, and you will never find it. There will always be another one out there that people will be pushing.

Question: I think that is why the question, on the point of whether or not you might have teachers themselves identify what they think is important for students to learn, is an important starting point. Then, you look for the resources which support the goals or objectives of the district as opposed to having some external source do this, whatever the source is: the textbook, the text, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, or some organization determining a direction.

Answer: Yes, but I am not sure either of those is a very good solution.

Question: What is the answer then?

Answer: There isn't any "The Answer." The way Los Angeles approached it was by defining all these outcomes and then getting a test designed to measure those outcomes. Another way to approach it is starting with the textbook and identifying benchmark skills. I am just giving two alternatives that seem reasonable. Both of them seem more reasonable than asking all your teachers to list what they teach and trying to make that list represent the district's objectives. I think some teachers don't have a good idea of what really needs to be taught in all the areas. They don't have the resources to do that kind of analysis, a task analysis or textbook analysis, or whatever else would be a reasonable analysis on which to base those decisions. It is just too much to expect teachers to do that. We typically try to do things by concensus and this is why the lists of objectives for districts are often very long. It is easier to get a concensus if we let everybody have their say. We put them all together and that is our list of objectives.

Question: Listing what they teach is just the first step. In their groups, we want them to answer the question, "What must be taught?"

Answer: Grade level groups of teachers work together on that?

Question: Yes, across grades and in some cases across buildings. That list gets smaller and smaller. Eventually we end up with a priority list of concepts or content areas which must be taught in every grade. What we're finding is the content is listed as benchmark. This allows the teachers to feel that they have been deciding equally. We find that this works very well. There is a major resource called PRIME, which has considered every textbook in mathematics ever published, and it has massive content authority lists based on every concept that has ever appeared. So, when teachers start to look at the universe of things that they're doing against something else, they have that system to draw on.

Answer: Okay, you do have those kinds of resources for that system.

Question: I will say this though. That process does cause a lot of discussion, I should say argument, among teachers as to what should be taught in each grade. But what it is pointing out is that we have variance among the grades regarding content.

Answer: I would like to react to what you have said. First of all, that seems to be another reasonable kind of way to go about this, very close to something about which Susan Everson and I were talking. She was relaying how they had worked with a school district where they gave the school district the information about benchmark skills. The teachers used that as one of their resources, like using PRIME in your case, as a way of starting to work through this objective process. I was telling her that I have mixed emotions about that, because on the one hand, I hate to see people reinventing the wheel. It's a lot of work and it takes a lot of time and expertise to do it and do it well. On the other side of the coin, when that is done as a group effort, there develops some comaraderie, some teamwork, and the teachers buy into it. These are their objectives because they have worked on them, and they are going to do something about it instructionally. If the objectives are just dumped on them, they may not have that commitment. So, I think that there are good and bad things about the approach of having the involvement of teachers in this process. If you do heavily involve teachers in the process, I would give them a resource like PRIME, or like benchmark skills so they won't be starting out from scratch. Typically, they don't start out from scratch anyway; they use the information from the previous year.

Question: There's one major place to which PRIME makes a contribution on the map you have given. Rather than an "x" at three or four grade levels, PRIME causes teachers to raise the question, "Do you introduce that concept at the level? Are you striving for mastery? Are you reinforcing?" The issue becomes then, not just whether it's being taught, but exactly what is the purpose of instruction at that particular point in time when the concept appears at a particular grade level.

Answer: That brings up the whole question of how teachers are expected to be involved in the management and in the planning of instruction. There is one body of experts who say that they are going to plan down to this micro-level, and that they are going to know what the teachers are doing every minute of every day, individually for every student and that they will have massive graphs and charts of this. Then the other group is saying that the teachers will just sort of go through the content without any information or tracking system. Most of us are someplace in between, not quite knowing where in between we should be. I don't have any solid answers for you. All I can say is beware of too much complexity that you dump on the teachers, particularly in the beginning. Remember, one of the first concerns people have is that a new process is overwhelming. And you want to avoid that kind of reaction because you can lead to rejection.

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## Step 2 - Planning

Teachers need to make decisions about time, materials, and teaching strategies appropriate for helping students learn the skills that are specified in the objectives. In Los Angeles, we have one or more contact persons who are responsible for staff development in each school. We give them a notebook that walks them through this process of how they can do this with their teachers back in their school. We and the district provide the technical support for the trainers back at the school site on an "as needed" basis, and we monitor it pretty well too.

We suggest a number of staff activities that focus on planning. There are three main topics.

1. First, we have the list of skills that have been identified and the skills about which we are particularly concerned. Part of the planning considers when something is going to be

taught--when in this school year, when in the school semester, and what weeks some skills are going to be covered. For mathematics, written composition, or reading, teachers make a commitment about when the teaching is going to be done.

2. The second part involves how much instructional time is going to be devoted to a skill. We struggled with how this is done and we have made some mistakes. Finally, it was decided that the decision was on how many weeks or how many lessons does the teacher want to devote to this skill area during the year.

3. Finally, what materials are we going to use? A number of materials that show the relationship between texts and their objectives. Decisions about materials are not easy decisions to make. There must be some knowledge about prerequisites; some knowledge about where this information is in the textbook that is being used; and some knowledge about how effective the instruction really is.

Based on these activities teachers develop a plan for instruction, a plan that gives special emphasis to those skills about which they were particularly concerned. The result is their plan; not a plan that was dumped on them. It is one that they developed on the basis of their concerns.

That is the planning. Hopefully, it takes place right at the beginning of the school year and is based upon that first step of "What is it we're responsible for teaching?"

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Question: This planning occurs in each building?

Answer: Yes, and these are grade level groups doing the planning. "What are we going to do to make sure we cover all the skills about which we said we were worried, and the district said we had to cover this year?" It is grade level groups saying that it is their plan.

Question: So, what precedes this would be "the what or the content" of where the plan is now. There are two ways that you have done this. Where would we be with the simulation activity that we just did?

Answer: The way Los Angeles did it was to have a precise list of objectives and then have a test that was matched to that list. Your activity can be like Los Angeles did it. Just make sure everybody knows that list of objectives.

Question: So the "what" was decided before the test. That is where I was confused. I thought you were asking people to look at an item analysis or look at a test, look at the results, to determine the "what."

Answer: Okay, let's make sure everybody understands that.

Question: In other words, the document is in place. The document and curriculum are in place before the item analysis activity takes place.

Answer: Right, for Los Angeles, the list of objectives is the first stage. Then a decision is made to have a test that matches it. So you have already a precise list and an aligned test. That's one way to approach it. The other way is to look at benchmark skills and either get a Proficiency Verification System or some other way to find out how you're doing on those.

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## Step 3 - Monitoring

Teachers should monitor the progress that they are making on implementing the plan. Then adjustments should be made in the instructional plans for the remainder of the year. There are two aspects of that to consider.

- The first one involves looking at the plan and asking "Have we taught it yet? If we haven't, that means we need to readjust the rest of our plan to make sure we teach it the rest of the year." We need to give teachers the tools to monitor their progress on the implementation of their plan.
- The other aspect is "How well are the students doing in acquiring those skills that we had hoped by this time in the year that they would acquire?" To assist the teachers with this aspect, we give them some supplementary practice which can be used for diagnostic tests.

## Step 4 - Acknowledgement of Results

***It is important to have a summary of the year where teachers and principals take a little credit for some of the success.***

The final step, the fourth one, is to acknowledge and sum up the results for the year and get ready for the next year. We try to help people emphasize their accomplishments and their achievements. That is important for everybody's mental health. It is facilitated through an assessment system that matches what they are trying to do in a classroom. They end up in a much better position, because they can see the results. Teachers work hard all year long, and then they are all too often measured by an instrument that has little bearing on what they have been slaving over the whole year. Then it is printed in the paper as "Your school failed again!" A very discouraging kind of thing but this kind of a system, where the assessment is aligned with the curriculum, eliminates that problem.

* * *

Question: If I were a superintendent of schools and my system was being evaluated by State testing codes, I bet you that I would be going with that test that matches the programs well.

Answer: I think states vary quite a bit and school districts vary in terms of mandated tests that they have to give students. Some of them are quite good and match pretty well with the benchmark skills. Others are norm-referenced instruments that are not very good matches with what educators are trying to do in the classroom. That is an unfortunate case.

Question: Please discuss training schedules.

Answer: We have built this into the schools' regular staff development program. The schools have some time during the school year that is set aside for staff development. We ask that they not do this type of activity in addition to the staff development program they normally do, but do this instead. This is the base program giving them the tools to do their job. It is that kind of substitution. There are problems in squeezing it into the time they have allocated. We find that some principals are terrifically inventive, and they may have a regular schedule four days a week, and then release the students a little early on the fifth day. They may schedule once every two weeks. The staff development modules which we built for them are very flexible, so they can squeeze them into a fifteen minute block or a thirty minute block. We try to accommodate all kinds of patterns that are existing. It is not one of those things where there is a massive dose of training. It is not, "You have to spend two weeks during the summer to get ready for this one, and then we'll implement." It is meant to fit in with the work that is done. There must, however, be some time where teacher groups can work together.

Question: Is there any evidence that the success that you are achieving with this program is spilling over on the State test? Do you have any before and after scores to demonstrate that fact?

Answer: Yes, we do, and we have gotten gains in the SES scores. Our schools are above the district average in our progress on moving those scores higher on every subject matter at every grade level. We also have correlation evidence of the State test with the SES. It is quite high, so we are moving in that direction.

Question: Has there been any consideration how the program will educate parents?

Answer: Yes, we have proposed a brochure that would go to parents in which we explain what is happening and why it is happening. If that is well done, it would be a big step forward. Anything that can be done to help the schools communicate with our public is a big step forward.

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Let me tell you just one more thing about that last step. You also have to plan for the next year and set aside some time, hopefully at the beginning of the year. At that point the teachers will be at the place where they say, "You know, we should have done all of this a little earlier this year." Maybe a half day could be squeezed out at the beginning of the year.

*Teachers begin to think about what skills students need and what can they do to make sure the students get those skills. That is what teaching is all about, and we hope we can push the secondary schools in that direction.*

One additional comment about secondary schools. We are working with junior high schools now, and to be very blunt with you, it seems to me that secondary schools have the teachers who have an allegiance primarily to a subject matter area and less to education of students in specific skills. That does not mean that we give up. Still we can make big strides; we have longer to go and it is harder to get there.

I am writing a second draft of the major plan for a pilot program on how we are going to work with secondary schools next year. We hope to budge people a little bit, so that in certain key areas they will begin to think about how important it is to make sure students have a skill and that the instruction is related to that skill. If that can be done for just a few key areas, some secondary people will change and hopefully they will start to generalize about the other things that they are teaching students.

The last handout (Appendix C, No. 2) is a teachers' guide to curriculum alignment.

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# SCHOOL CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

by Mr. Eugene Howard and Mr. David Jackson

## Eugene Howard

***Everyone uses the term "climate" somewhat differently. School learning climate includes those characteristics of a school which are most frequently associated with achievement, and it is only a piece of the climate concept.***

Our goal is to build bridges across the chasm which traditionally has separated what we know as good practice from what we actually do in schools; that is, to bring practice more into line with what research tells us is promising or successful. The bridge, I think, consists of a process, some tools, and some instruction on how to use the tools. In order to make practice and research more congruent, we need a simple process, not a complex one, not one that requires a room full of computer printouts, but a manageable process for putting into effect good practice.

You will have participatory, hands-on experience with a major part of an eight-step process on school climate improvement. Hopefully, by taking part in this simulated experience, you will be able to see the interrelationship of all the steps.

Before we begin our simulation, I would like to share a few vignettes about what climate means. One of the ways in which we work with schools and faculties is by going into a school with a visitation team. Being part of a visitation team gives us an opportunity to experience the climate of many different kinds of schools.

Red Sandstone Elementary School. I can recall, for example, walking into a school in Vail, Colorado. Vail has a very beautiful elementary school. Look out front and you can see the ski runs. Go across the bridge and you're right at the ski level.

The first thing I saw when I walked in the door of the Red Sandstone Elementary School was a big pile of canned goods and clothing. I went up to the secretary, and I said, "Why are all these canned goods and clothing piled up, what's going on in here?"

"Well," she said, "a family got burned out of its trailer, and the faculty and the kids are all pitching in to help them out over a real tough time."

I think that as soon as you walk in the door you can get the feel of a school. Schools have personalities and you can sense whether that place is a warm place or a cold place. Those are joint terms, warm or cold, personal or

*First impressions—how a place feels—that's what we're talking about when we talk about climate.*

impersonal, caring places or not caring places, trusting places or not trusting places. That's something you can feel.

Centennial Elementary School. There is a Centennial Elementary School in suburban Denver. It's called Centennial School because it's right next to the race track. I was interviewing a teacher. We were sitting out in the hall, and she was showing me a lot of simulations and games that she had developed for her classroom. I was taking notes on interview cards that are provided for such occasions, and I was classifying what she was saying about climate determinants.

We were sitting at kind of an intersection with long corridors, at 90 degree angles. I could see down one corridor. I saw at the end of that corridor a teacher and a class starting to move from one place to another. All of a sudden, almost at the intersection, the whole group stopped. I couldn't figure out why they were stopping, because I couldn't see down the other corridor. So I got up and I looked down the other corridor. This is a school that has a lot of handicapped kids. There was a little kid who looked as if she was about seven or eight. She had one of those tripods that you put in front of you and you walk up to it. She had started at the far end of the corridor, and was slowly working her way up to the intersection. The class was just standing there watching her. When she finally got there, everybody applauded.

I went over to the teacher, and I said, "Why did you do that? I didn't even see you stop the class."

She said, "In this school we teach everybody to care about everybody else."

That's what we're talking about.

A New York High School. Another example. This is a large high school in a community in New York State. I walked in the door of this large high school, and I stopped the first kid I saw.

I said, "Tell me, is this a good school?"

She looked at me and said, "Man, this place is the pits!"

My first impression! She was right, by the way. Subsequently, I came to agree with her and many of her observations. We're talking about the extent to which there is trust in the school--the extent to which there is caring and respect.

*The school as an institution is a caring kind of place. We saw the school as having a personality of it's own, very much as individuals have personalities.*

Nova Laboratory School. I served as director of the Nova Laboratory School in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, for a short period of time before they threw me out. The reason they threw me out was that we developed a very open and positive climate school which nobody loved except the kids. This was the only school that I have ever left where the kids cried. I guess behind the scenes the parents applauded. We did not build any lockers in that school. All we built were little cabinets like furniture in a home. I hate lockers by the way, they're noisy and they're cold, and they add to a hospital-like quality of a school. It's not good for the feel of the school. In Florida, you don't need a place to hang your coats, just a place for books and materials; a locker is not necessary.

About the second month of school, a group of kids came in to see me. We usually sat around in a circle on the floor to talk over problems. They said, "You have a problem in your school." I said, "What kind of problem do I have?"

"People are stealing like crazy around this school."

"Why is that a problem for me? I'm not doing any of the stealing."

"But they're stealing from us, and it's a problem for us. Furthermore, we think you should do something about it."

*We say that a school with a positive climate is a place where morale is very high. It is a place where there is a lot of respect, where the school respects the people and the people respect one another, and the people respect learning. It is a place where there is a great deal of caring.*

"What do you think I should do?"

"We think you should put locks on our lockers."

"Why do you think I didn't put locks on the lockers in the first place?"

"Oh, you didn't put locks on our lockers in the first place, because you wanted to show us that you trusted us."

"That's right. Not only that, but I wanted you to trust one another because that's what this school is all about."

Then one kid said, "I know somebody that's doing the stealing."

And this is one of the things that happens so seldom in this professional life. Just at that instant, somebody opened the door and stuck his head in and one of the people in the circle said, "And there's one of them now--let's go get him!" And they all got up and they ran after the kid, and they grabbed him and brought him back in the circle.

They said to this kid, "You and some other people that we know around here have been stealing our stuff, and we want it to stop!"

> It wasn't my problem at all; it was their problem. What the school stood for was trust and caring, and that's what climate is. Places that stand for respect and trust and caring are different kinds of places than places that stand for distrust, and suspicion, and fragmentation where everybody is doing something to everybody else.

## SIMULATION

We have established in our state a process for moving a school toward a positive climate. The entire process takes about six months, but there is a part of that which I would like to ask you to experience today. David Jackson is going to describe the series of events in that process after our simulation.

***We are saying that it is important to strengthen strengths as well as to strengthen weaknesses. We are not saying, "Let's go find out what is wrong with your school and we will fix it." All you get when you find a problem and bring it up to a minimum level of acceptability is relief from a problem. The way you get excellence is to find out what is working already in a school, and then help people do it better. That is the positive approach.***

Imagine that this group is a group from a single school and not from all over a region like we really are. Imagine that:

- some of you are parent leaders;
- some of you are faculty leaders; and
- some of you are student leaders.

A part of the simulation requires identity cards (Appendix D, No. 1). For that reason, it is necessary to get five to a table, because there are five distinct identities.

We would like for you to be true to your role in accordance with the role card, and move through the simulation in accordance with the instruction sheet, "Instruction to Small Groups" (Appendix D, No. 2). The purpose of the identity cards is not to set up adversarial roles, even though there are two teachers in the group who have slightly different philosophies. This is not an experiment with conflict in this simulation.

It will be necessary to be able to read the output information from the instrument in this simulation. There is a written instrument that is used, not to measure the climate, but an evaluation instrument that is diagnostic. It responds to the question, "What should we do to improve the climate of the school?"

(Appendix D, No. 3). It is a good thing to read the question as you discuss it, because this summarizes the questions and the visual on some of the points.

On the grid (Appendix D, No. 4), notice that down the side of the grid there are specific activities, programs, and projects which might take place in order to improve the climate in accordance with a particular determinant.

***I think the most important element of building a positive climate is that of involving lots and lots of people in making the school a better place.***

- The "what is" lines indicate student (line 1) and faculty (line A) responses to the question "To what extent is this practice operating in the school now?"
- On the "what should be" lines, both students (line 2) and faculty (line B) are asked to make a judgement as to the potential of that activity for improving climate if it were working well.

What both teachers and kids may be saying is, "We are not doing it, but if we did do it, we would have a very positive influence on the climate of our school." That's the big gap. So on the chart, look for those big gaps. Those are good potential projects. If you learn to read these charts, they will tell you a great deal about what faculty and students or parents (if you want to plot parents' reactions on the line) are saying.

- We call an item a strength if it is given a 3.0 or over on "what is." The 3.0 means that the item is operating well, but on a limited basis. At 4.0 it is operating well schoolwide. So if the item is 3.0 or over on "what is," and 3.4 on "what should be," 3.4 would indicate a positive effect and it is probably working well throughout the school.
- If the item is 2.2 or under on "what is," 2 meaning that it's hardly happening at all in the school, plus a gap of 1.2 or more between what it should be, this is an area of concern. That's the criteria to use in order to place labels on the items.

Each group will deal with a different determinant (Appendix D, No. 5). The example on the handout is "Effective Communications." Another determinant is "Active Learning," the extent to which learning is hands-on, reality-oriented, high-involvement as opposed to low involvement, theoretical, etc. Another is "Support Instruction," the extent to which kids can receive support and help when they need it, and so on.

These are called determinants, because they are characteristic of schools that determine the extent to which the climate is positive or negative. Each group will be dealing with one of these determinants. When the group reports, everyone will hear some information about all of the determinants, and it will be clearer what they mean. Read the definition for the climate term that is being discussed in each group, so that the group will understand.

***Counselors or psychologists will typically talk about school climate in terms of interpersonal relationships or characteristics of people. Organizational people very often will look at school climate as an aspect of the organizational personality, i.e., to what extent is it a healthy organization or an unhealthy organization.***

The group will brainstorm ideas for improving climate that relate to the determinant that the group discusses. Some of these ideas will come from the instrument itself where there is good faculty support or good student support for the idea. There should be 25 or 30 ideas on how to improve climate in the way related to the topic that is under discussion. There are complete instructions (Appendix D, No. 6). Read the rules on brainstorming and follow them. Try to resist the temptation during the brainstorming part of the simulation to discuss each item as it's presented. The idea is to present ideas that trigger other ideas, and get as long a list as possible. Discuss the ideas and prioritize them.

The next thing that would happen, if we were to carry out the simulation to the end of the workshop, would be everyone would receive something like a ballot that would contain a list of all 12 of the determinants. Participants would be asked to name the top three on the list which they feel, if improved in the school, would result in the greatest improvement in the climate. These would then be tallied while the rest of the workshop was on break, and then we would come back and report what the top three choices for determinants were.

At that point, we would ask for the formation of task forces in those three areas (Appendix D, No. 7).

- We can form one task force, or as many as five, but never more than five. Three is an optimal number.

- We would ask for volunteers who would like to work on those three. Maybe one of them would be Active Learning, and so the Active Learning group would already have a number of suggestions to start their action plan. Maybe another one would be the Material Determinants, and they would already have a number of suggestions for the task force.

- The last thing that we would do would be to meet with those task forces for just a few moments in the workshop to determine a time and a place for their first meeting and to get the list of the people who volunteered.

Usually, we will get 50 percent of the participants volunteering for a task force. The lowest percentage we have gotten was 30 percent. That was because proper work had not been done to prepare people before the workshop. There has to be an awareness session.

The highest has been 100 percent. That was in a fairly small elementary school of 500 students where the faculty just decided that they all would be involved in the project. And that was beautiful, because we had the whole cafeteria with every faculty member working on a task force.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: Do you have the kids involved in the task forces?

Answer: Yes, in fact, a lot of student councils sponsor task forces of just students, the Student Council School Improvement Task Force. In one area, there was a committee to involve the uninvolved, where the kids sought out kids who weren't involved in any of the activities and invited them to come in to activities. They formed a committee to decide what kinds of activities they might offer that would be attractive to some of the uninvolved students. One of the most common things is mural painting. You can tell when you're in a climate improvement school because of the murals. And that's very often sponsored by the Student Council.

Question: Are the members of the task force volunteers?

Answer: Yes, they are volunteers. In the workshop we invite parent leaders and students to participate. The student leaders who come are usually sent by the Student Council and prestigious-type organizations in the school. So we're involving leaders to start. But the Council may spin off a task force that would involve non-Council members, depending on the need. The parent organization might sponsor task forces. Task forces can be teacher sponsored and predominantly composed of teaching staff. A task force on improving effectiveness of teaching would probably be mostly teachers, or 100 percent teachers. A task force on improving communications, especially between the home and the school, might very well be a lot of parents, teachers, and kids, all three, since you want to improve communication three ways. So, the content or the make up of a task force depends on tasks. We suggest that you take another look at your membership once you develop your preliminary work plan, because you may not have the type of talent that you need to complete the task.

Question: How to you involve parents? Do you take this written form to parents?

Answer: Certainly, as you can tell by looking at the questions, this would give some parents a lot of trouble. It's asking for information a lot of parents do not have about the school. So, I would use it only with informed parents who know what is going on in the school. I would, however, involve as many parents as possible on the baseline data survey. That is more like an attitude or an opinionnaire about different aspects of the climate in the school, and they would be 100 percent involved in this.

Question: When great discrepancies occur between what the teachers think is happening and what the students think is happening, how do you deal with getting the teachers to accept the students' opinions about how things are happening?

Answer: I think the best way is to do a workshop on some of those topics, bring the students and faculty together in the same discussion group, and simply ask for the interpretation of the question. And that can happen before the workshop in which you've just participated. The first step is to get the data, the second step is to present the data, and the third step is to ask the question, "What do the data mean?" At that point, you are there as a faculty member and you're saying, "How come the students are saying this, and the faculty is saying this?" Through discussion you get some answers.

Question: But is it just student leaders that are involved?

Answer: Initially.

Question: Maybe they don't share. Maybe they have a different opinion than the overall students do.

Answer: I'm sure they do. One way you could get at that, although it's not typically done, is pull in some of the people used from some of the "out" groups.

Question: Do you ever have a battery that just totally rejects an opinion?

Answer: Usually, the first set of plans that a task force develops are preliminary plans. And as it grows, it can grow in the direction that some of your dissidents might want it to grow. The involvement is not over with the workshop. The task forces involve people or come in contact with people.

Question: Is the data that we have here provided only by student leaders and not by the total student body?

Answer: As a rule, that's the case. If you go to total student body, or a sampling of the student body, you'll get slightly different perceptions and you might get into the problem of people not caring. Now you can go either way, and there are pros and cons about going either way. One of the most important things is that the people who respond be given adequate preparation. That has to be done through some large group presentation. Filmstrips are used for that. There has to be a series of awareness activities leading up to this point so that people who are responding know first of all what the process is, what's going to be done with the information, and how they are going to be involved in what's going to be done. If you can do that with the whole student body, then fine. In some cases it's not recommended.

Question: How are the leaders identified?

Answer: Usually through the Council. The Council plus leaders of designated organizations. I'm not presribing one way or the other.

Question: I'm an elementary school principal. We do not have a Student Council. How do you get students' opinions?

Answer: Usually, in an elementary school, I will get only the opinions of the older children. We don't have a form of this instrument for primary kids. There is a form of the baseline data instrument that can be used for children as young as first and second grade, so that they would be involved in the opinionnaire which measures climate, but not in the diagnostic context. We're talking about two instruments here. The first instrument is to establish baseline data and answer the question, "To what extent is the climate positive or negative in a school?" You want everybody to answer who can possibly answer, because you are going to use the results of that instrument to chart the progress of your school and to find out whether or not you've actually made a difference in climate. In a diagnostic instrument, you want the people who are the most knowledgeable about what it is you are diagnosing, and your primary kids have a lot of trouble with this instrument. I don't think you'd use this.

David Jackson

In Kentucky, after looking at the results of research and looking at data that were generated through school climate activities, we believe that all schools, that every school, at every building level, should be continually involved in trying to improve the climate of the school. And when you're working on climate improvement, you're working on improving the climate for students, for faculty, and for the community. You're trying to make it a better climate for everybody that has a connection with the school. When it's a better place, the data will showing that a lot of good things will happen at that school.

***School climate improvement is not something that is done to fix the school so that it stays fixed. School climate improvement is long-range.***

We were looking for a process that we could offer to schools in Kentucky, which would serve as a continual kind of process that could be used over and over and that could keep focusing on school climate from year to year. We needed a process to offer people, and we found this process that we believe is a good model. It was developed by the League of School Climate Improvement in the State of Colorado under the guiding hand of Eugene Howard.

A summary of the process is the handout (Appendix D, No. 8). There are some unique points at each step, and we will consider these points.

The first step in the process is the formation of a School Climate Improvement Committee at the building level, whether it's an elementary school, middle school, or a high school.

- the committee is responsible for the specific charges of the first three steps;
- it is the managing group of the Climate Improvement Process;
- it keeps the school focused on improving climate in a particular school;

- it is actually a working committee, not just an advisory group; and

- it should be composed of some select people; staff members, parents, students, and teachers who believe that school should be humane, who are willing to do some work, and who are willing to bring some real skills to the committee. Also, there should be two or three people from the community.

The principal is a key person in the School Climate Improvement Committee. Before the first committee meeting, the principal draws up a charge statement so that the members will understand what is to be done (see Appendix D, No. 9). There are certains tasks that are defined for the committee, and it is very important that they be given these tasks.

*The principal will say, "I don't know what's happened to this faculty, but I've never seen them so enthusiastic." This is because people are actively involved in making the school a better place. They no longer feel put upon or that everything is coming down on them (the major causes of teacher burn-out). They can actually influence the nature of the place which in turn influences the climate.*

The second step in the process is that the School Climate Improvement Committee collects baseline data. The data are not collected in order to compare one school to another, but to state what the school is like, before anything is done to change the climate. There are two types of baseline data that should be collected:

1. the general overall measurement of the extent to which the school climate is positive at the time the data are collected, and

2. measurement of the inadequate symptoms of climate.

   Some of these symptoms are:

   - absenteeism,
   - truancy,
   - discipline problems,
   - vandalism,
   - low and failing grades,
   - dropout,
   - class cutting, and
   - pupil apathy.

If there are a lot of these problems, then there probably is a negative climate. As your climate improves, the symptoms will be relieved; they have a tendency to reduce.

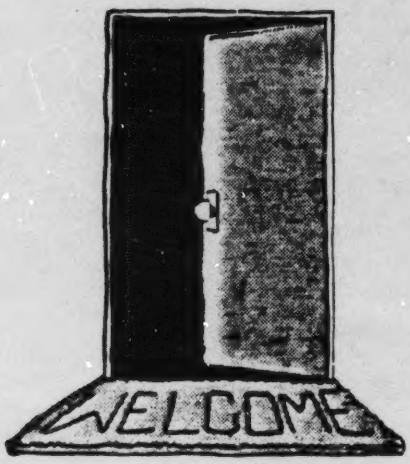
The instrument that is used to look at the first type of data collected is the CFK Limited Instrument which we have developed.

The third step is the faculty, student, and parent awareness. There are activities to prepare them to understand what climate improvement is all about, and what is to be accomplsihed in the process.

> ***I would like to suggest that the time has arrived when we need to shift the emphasis from remediating students over to remediating schools. If, indeed, we can change the schools that our children attend to more positive kinds of places, then we can get a change in the symptoms of alienation simultaneously.***

The fourth step of the process is to complete an assessment. You have the results of one type of assessment in your simulation with the charts presenting the concerns and the strengths.

After the climate of the school has been assessed, there is a workshop session in which there is some brainstorming and prioritizing. The faculty, some of the students, and some of the parents go through this workshop. That's the simulation you've been in. In this process, you were looking at the assessment data, and then brainstorming and prioritizing. That simulation took you through that particular step.



After the brainstorming and prioritizing, there is the formation of task forces, and we've talked about that a good deal already. Task forces are working groups that volunteer to work on a particular determinant using the results of the brainstorming. They operate on priorities that were established in the brainstorming session.

As the process moves on, it moves to task force management and formative evaluation. The task force management is extremely important. The principal and the School Climate Improvement Committee are the guiding forces in the management of the task forces. They:

- keep them on a schedule,
- keep them active, and
- keep them on the task.

The final step before this process is recycled is the evaluation of what has happened as a result of going through the process.

This process is not particularly new, but there are some unique points in the process.

- The organization of the School Climate Improvement Committee is unique. The principal is key. The principal must be the guiding hand and have an interest in improving climate. Most principals are very interested in improving climate because it will reduce their problems and it will help their achievement levels. However, the principal needs some kind of organization, and then he/she can provide the process.

***That is what we have been doing all of these years. We have been organizing to attack symptoms, and all we do when we attack symptoms is rearrange the status quo, because we never get to the causes. The causes of the kinds of symptoms of alienation have common roots. Those roots lie in the nature of the school. There is also a set of roots going into the nature of the family and home, and the nature of the community and the society, but the ones that we can control the most are the roots that lie in the nature of the school.***

- The task force chairman generally sits on the School Climate Improvement Committee and is able to continually report to his/her particular task force.

  The committee may be composed of:

  - student leaders,
  - a counselor or two,
  - a parent or two,
  - a leader or two in the community, and
  - teachers.

- It is a kind of cross-committee, and it's different from the principal's advisory committee or council. It is a committee that specifically focuses on the management of the school climate improvement within that school; that is its major task.

- In order to get the committee functioning, it must have a charge. The charge needs to come from the principal. Before the committee has its first meeting, or when it has its first meeting, it should have a charge from the principal of what is expected to happen with the particular committee.

- This committee is a working committee. It's not a committee that thinks up other things for other people to do, but it actually works. In order to keep everybody on the committee involved, specific tasks and specific responsibilities are assigned to committee members. There is a planning sheet for committee members (Appendix D, No. 10).

There are specific activities that are assigned, and there are target dates for completing those activities. The committee and each member of that committee is expected to have a responsibility and is given timelines. They develop timeframes in order to complete the work of that committee.

- Another unique factor about the process is the baseline data that are collected, and the fact that the committee has a charge to pick up this baseline data. It is unique in the way that the information is used. It is gathered as baseline data to say:
  - this is where we are as far as climate is concerned today; and
  - we will come back and look at the same data to see whether or not our activities have made any difference in what is going on in our schools:
    - if there has been some change;
    - if there has been a reduction in the problems that are the symptoms of negative climate; and
    - if the climate has improved.

The committee involves itself in making the school people totally aware of what school climate is all about. The kit that is marketed by ASCD has the total process in it. There are filmstrips and audiotapes that are very good for awareness sessions to explain what climate improvement is all about.

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## THE McREL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

by Dr. Susan T. Everson

Our interest at McREL is primarily of research and development application of effective schools research findings. We became interested in the McREL School Improvement Program about three years ago. A group of six McREL staff members collected the material, screened it, and we worked to understand it ourselves. Then, we put it into a format useful to people in the field. In addition to collecting research reports, we invited researchers in to talk with us, and one of our group members visited programs across the country. After doing these things, we developed some requirements for a program. I want to share those with you before I talk about the specifics of the program.

*We decided first and foremost that we would not compartmentalize the program.*

We decided first and foremost that we would not compartmentalize the program. We had looked at programs across the country and found schools that were working this year on one area or another. Yet, the areas that were not being addressed were having an impact on the areas that were being addressed. So what we designed was very comprehensive. We said that we would work with schools who would work in all the areas we included in our design.

Second, we decided that we would work with groups of people. It could be a full faculty at a school. More often it was not, but it had to be a representative group of both faculty and administration. We do some work, however, with consortiums of administrators in such areas as leadership training.

*We work regular school hours, having substitutes for those teachers who are participating.*

We began working with some pilot districts two years ago. We learned immediately that working with teachers after school was not successful. So we work regular school hours, having substitutes for those teachers who are participating (sometimes on Saturdays if teachers said they would rather come in on Saturdays than miss a day with the students). We do this throughout the year with four formal work sessions scheduled about a month apart. Ideally, there is one session in late October, one in late November, one in January, and one in February. This gives people time to do what they have to do to begin making the changes that we ask of them.

Before we begin staff development, we develop the calendar and process in each district. This is critically important. We have looked at the research on clinical

*It is extremely important to work with the Board for their support.*

supervision and are strongly committed to some of the ideas that came from this work. One of the things that we found was that the actual formal training will differ district to district depending upon the makeup of the district. We have to work with the people, usually central office people, to develop the format. For example, I may spend extensive time with the Board. It is extremely important to work with the Board for their support.

I found that the selection of team members can be critically important for the success of the program. It is best if the teachers participate in the selection. They know something about what they are getting into, and they are committed before they come to the first session. In one district, I went into each school and made a presentation. They were free to join the program or not. Interestingly, all schools chose to participate, and then teams were selected by the vote of the faculty in each school.

*The most important thing for any district is to set up a plan that meets the specific needs of that district.*

In some districts, usually in large districts, schools believed to be supportive of this type of work are selected to begin the program. Those schools will then act as models for other schools. One superintendent wanted to work with one full faculty instead of teams, and then have that faculty be available to other schools the following years. So we do all kinds of different things in terms of format. The most important thing for any district is to set up a plan that meets the specific needs of that district.

And then we get into the training. There are four formal training days for the team. We added two formal training days for administrators. Those two days are set up for instructional leadership training. The principals who are comfortable at that sort of work are extremely good at helping those who are not. We often spread out those days into four half days. I feel that four one-half days is best, because there can be continuous assessment throughout the year. They can talk about what is happening with their schools and teachers and how their goals are changing as a result.

So there are six formal training days including the two for administrators. We have districts who want more than that, and we are willing to talk with them about that possibility. They may want training for parents, board members, or citizens, and we will build that into their plan. For our needs, however, we need four formal training days the first year. In addition, there are in-between sessions if they are needed, and we call those informal sessions. And certainly after the four formal training days, there are informal site visits, which are followup sessions that are absolutely critical for communication. Those occur throughout the second year, by need, although there is nothing specific in the schedule. Normally, we try to build in local support agencies such as state education agencies and intermediate service agencies. That is basically the format.

*The curriculum is very important . . . what you teach kids, and how you assess for that.*

Now, the question is: What do we do? We developed a fairly simple framework to show what we were going to do at each training session (Appendix E, No. 1). Basically, we said that we are looking into three major areas that we believe contribute to school improvement goals, whatever the goals are. This is not an "add-on" program, an addition to whatever the schools are doing. Teachers are sometimes skeptical--understandably. We have been out there with mainstreaming, with career education, and all the extras. They have gone to the workshops, and it seems to be one more thing for them to do in the classroom. But, here we are simply looking at good classroom and school management that underlies all programs.

The first area is Teaching--all the things that go on in the classroom. Things like time management, classroom organization, learning styles, and teaching styles are included.

The second area, Curriculum/Assessment Relationship, is critically important. While the BTES work is important, it is what you do during those minutes that must be considered. Increasing engagement rate is only as good as what you teach the students during the increase. The curriculum is very important--how that is looked at, what you teach kids, and how you assess for that.

*The leadership, the organization of the building, the climate, the environment, how one sets up citizen involvement, parent participation—all those are critical factors.*

The third area is Building Level Leadership and Organization. We know that the very successful schools are those that have outstanding building level leadership. The leadership, the organization of the building, the climate, the environment, how one sets up citizen involvement, parent participation--all those are critical factors.

In each of these three areas we have designed materials to help schools look at themselves to see what they are doing right now. We know that we can come up with an engagement rate for teachers. We know how to help teachers observe for that, and we teach them to do that.

In the area of Curriculum/Assessment Relationship, we do preworkshop questionnaires with open-ended questions about what they do in the areas of curriculum design and assessment systems. The other thing we do in the area of assessment is a content analysis of the tests they use.

*It is our attempt to get people to look at themselves so they can see the areas where they need to improve.*

In the area of Building Level Leadership we put together an instrument based on effective schools research. This is called the Academic Indicator Survey, now called the School Improvement Survey. It is our attempt to get people to look at themselves, so they can see the areas where they need to improve. This is a constructive, positive approach to improvement. They can see what their strengths are, build on those, and then go to the areas where they have not really addressed their need as well as they should have.

We devote most of one workshop to each area, although we cover all three areas during each session. For example, during the first workshop we spend most of our time on the area of teaching. We teach the participants how to do observations, and we talk about the research in the area of teaching. We basically give an overview of the other areas.

At the second workshop, we devote most of the time to curriculum assessment and barely look at teaching, although we do review that area and look at the data they gathered. We just begin to look at building level leadership during this workshop.

*We teach the participants how to do observations, and we talk about the research in the area of teaching.*

In the third session, we spend most of the time on building level leadership and organization. We do go back and review the things we talked about in the first two sessions. There are required assignments between sessions. The assumption is that each person will complete the tasks, so that we can review what we have done and then focus on the new session.

The fourth session is a planning session. We review everything we have covered. They have fairly important and sophisticated questions to ask which we try to cover. The rest of the session is devoted to the first step of developing their building level long-range improvement plan. We have had one year plans and five year plans. They vary, but each school team develops a plan.

Today, we will cover only briefly the sections on building level leadership and curriculum assessment alignment, which you will get in other sessions of this workshop. Most of our time will be spent in the teaching area.

We will look at the handout "Effective School Characteristics" (Appendix E, No. 2). This is a quick overview of those characteristics. For example, in 15,000 Hours teacher actions in lessons made a difference. In a workshop session, we talk about what those teacher actions would look like. We talk about it, we model it, and give the teachers ideas to take back to their classrooms. They come back and tell us whether the ideas worked or not. We have various strategies that are suggested for them to try.

*These teachers are up and on their feet and there is teacher/child interaction all day long.*

We talk about direct teaching and what works when they use direct teaching strategies. We find that this kind of information is often misused. For example, at a meeting I attended, Edmonds spoke about teacher expectation characteristics and the teacher's role. He said that what is needed is whole class instruction and direct instruction. You could see people writing that down. They would take that back to their schools and say, "O.K., we are going back to whole class instruction, direct teaching, no more fooling around in this classroom. If we only go back to the 50's, we will have no problems." I thought, "Oh, dear, here we go." So I asked that Edmonds define direct instruction and explain what the teacher would look like in that circumstance, so that we wouldn't have any misunderstanding. He said, "What I mean is that these teachers are up and on their feet and that there is teacher/child interaction all day long." In the training, we work in that area so we won't be misunderstood when we say "teacher actions."

What we found was a misuse of information, even on our part. We would give information, then go back into certain classrooms and what we would see wasn't what we expected. Now we are very cautious about that.

I suppose that when I go into schools and ask, "What are you here for?", I would hope to hear that taxpayers pay us to teach students. If they do not have that commitment, then they should not be there. Those schools that Edmonds and others talk about are obviously there to teach kids. That is apparent the minute you walk in the door. It is worth really focusing on the academics. The academic emphasis of the schools makes a difference in effective schools.

*Another point, rewards rather than punishment, made a difference.*

Another point, rewards rather than punishment, made a difference. According to research, punishment has a neutral effect unless physical punishment is used as the primary means to control the kids in school. If that is the case, it actually has a negative effect on achievement. What is found is that appropriate rewards seem to have a positive effect on achievement. These rewards need to be shared publicly.

So as we go through these characteristics, we talk about examples, we have role play, and we have suggestions that educators can take back and try in their schools.

*Every building that I have worked in the past year has chosen to work on expectations.*

The other thing that we use with teams on Building Level Leadership and Organization is the Academic Indicator Survey. The survey is based on six areas from the research on effective schools. Each page of the survey is devoted to an area that is positively associated with achievement in schools.

The questions are worded to avoid answering good or bad. Instead, the survey asks: does this exist in your school to a great degree, does it exist at all, or does it have anything to do with your school? There are indicators that are critically important to the decision-making process for the people when they get the profile back. We work with the team to develop additional individual indicators for their district. These questions cover time allocations, student disruptions, student and faculty motivation, expectations (every building that I have worked in the past year has chosen to work on expectations), classroom organization, teacher professionalism, building support for teachers, a monitoring system, and parental interest in student learning.

*If the norm-based test scores do not test what we are teaching, then those tests do not tell us much about our work in schools.*

Most of the plan that is developed at the fourth session is based on the profiles that the teams get on their schools. To protect the privacy of those at the building who are responding to the survey, McREL completes the profile of the survey. An outside person who does not have a stake in the outcome could do this.

The second area is Curriculum/Assessment Relationship. Much of our work in this area is based on the work from the Southwest Regional Educational Laboratory. SWRL's materials, as well as some of the work from Los Angeles, seemed critically important to us and had to be a part of what we were doing. Also, we had gotten some information from Michigan State on the curriculum and testing relationship. If the norm-based test scores do not test what we are teaching, then those tests do not tell us much about our work in schools. McREL encourages the use of a comprehensive assessment system.

What we are talking about in curriculum and assessment is a process to describe those skills and that knowledge which we expect all children to master and then assessing to see if mastery is attained. This does not have to occur at the same age. There are different learning styles and paces to consider, but we do expect students to master what we intend to teach.

*There are different learning styles and paces to consider, but we do expect students to master what we intend to teach.*

For example, if you have not looked at the Chicago Mastery Reading program, it would be worth the time to do so. One of the things the program does is to introduce a skill or concept to the class together, and then the follow-up activities associated with that skill or concept differ, depending on the need of the individual student. There are those who do not learn what we teach the first time. They need reinforcement, followup, and reteaching. Those children who understand the concept are ready for enrichment.

In the area of Curriculum/Assessment Relationship, we do a content analysis of the tests a district uses. We provide activities to the teams so that they can better match what they test to what they teach.

The third area in the McREL program is teaching. Today, the first thing we will consider is time use in the classroom (see Appendix E, No. 3). There will sometimes be a difference in time use between elementary and secondary schools. What period of time is devoted to instruction is the question we ask. We know from the Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study at Far West Laboratory that there is tremendous variation from class to class and school to school related to the time assigned to subject matter.

*We know that there is tremendous variation from class to class and school to school related to the time assigned to subject matter.*

After a school assesses for its percentage of time assigned for instruction, we must find out what portion of that time students are engaged in the tasks assigned.

At McREL, we have an observation sheet that we developed. Initially, each teacher selects nine students. Later that number can be increased. These nine students should include three high achievers, three middle achievers, and three low achievers.

Once a week, at the same time every week, the classrooms are observed. The teachers select the time about which they want information, the time that is most critical to the teachers.

The classroom observers do two things. First, they time those activities that are noninstructional. Those activities that are noninstructional are those activities in which the entire class is involved. If everyone is

*Basically, the staff of the school decided the morning is sacred–teachers will not be interrupted in the morning.*

interrupted, then that interruption is timed with a stop watch. Second, when instruction is occurring, the observers scan the nine students to see if each one is engaged in the assigned task. McREL staff collects those observation sheets and prepares a profile sheet for each teacher. Through this observation process teachers learn that various instructional strategies produce different engagement rates.

Once the engagement rate assessment is complete, teachers want to know what to do to increase engagement. For example, they want information: "What can I do about the student who has a high engagement rate and is achieving so poorly?" In the project, McREL presents strategies that can help teachers. We work with the teachers in various areas. For example, in high school, we talk about scheduling activities. They may set up teams of people who work with the same students. Together those teachers can revise students' schedules. One elementary school decided that announcements would be made at the same time every day unless there was a dire emergency, and assemblies were scheduled at the same time (in the late afternoon) throughout the year. Basically, the staff of the school decided the morning is sacred--teachers will not be interrupted in the morning.

Another topic we address is classroom organization. At the Laboratory, we sometimes divide organization information into five areas: Time, Organization and Structure, Students: Groups and Individuals, Curriculum-Content, and Curriculum-Process (see Appendix E, No. 4).

*For today, I will spend more time introducing, discussing, and reviewing seatwork and less in the final seatwork activities.*

Curriculum-Content means the materials the teacher uses, and Curriculum-Process means the instructional process--the interaction between the teacher and the students.

We start with the first area on your handout, "Time." "For today, I will spend more time introducing, discussing, and reviewing seatwork and less in the final seatwork activities." These sessions organize the classroom around their rules. Make sure the students know what the rules are, and they should know what the consequences are for breaking the rules. Don't wait until the kids break the rules before you tell them. They need to know beforehand.

"Today, I will attractively display students' work to demonstrate that I value their academic efforts." What we get here is: "I do that, but it is always the same kids." That is a problem, but I can share with you some

*Even the lowest achieving student will work diligently to get something that he or she would be proud of to put on the board.*

suggestions that have worked for me. You may put up a bulletin board and have a section for each student on that bulletin board. The children selected what they wanted on that bulletin board. They had to change it at least once a week, but they could change it as often as they liked. Be willing as a teacher to help them get their work in shape in order to get it up on the board. By letting them make the selection, you do not get in the situation of putting something on the board that the kids would be embarrassed about. Even the lowest achieving student will work diligently to get something that he or she would be proud of to put on the board. There are many techniques like that you can use. There should be something that every kid can display with pride.

"Today, I will face the class during small group lessons, so that I can observe and monitor all classroom activities." If the teacher sits in the right place for eye contact, that will make the difference. Even in the secondary situation, the positioning of yourself so you can observe the class, whether you are helping individuals or groups, is important. Turn your desk around so that when you are sitting at your desk (hopefully not often), you are observing the classroom. When teachers do that, they find that the engagement rate goes up.

*If you don't get something back in a week, you might as well not give it out.*

"Today, I will regularly move around the room, visually scan the room, and keep continual track of what is going on." These teachers in the classroom are on their feet all day long. They are up working with kids, they know what is going on, they know where everybody is, they are busy and exhausted by 2:30. But that is the kind of teacher who seems to be organizing classrooms in this way. So, we suggest to people that they be up and busy and involved in the classroom all day long.

"Today, I will give the students precise directions for assignment, including the time when the assignments are due, and when they will be corrected and returned." You can imagine the response. I also throw out here, "If you don't get something back in a week, you might as well not give it out." You need to get feedback from kids as soon as you possibly can. Some of the research that we've read in this area says that anything beyond a week the kids don't care about. The teachers wonder why, when they give it back, that it is wadded up and goes into the waste basket. The kids don't remember doing the assignment, they don't care if the teacher doesn't care enough to get it back sooner than that. There is a modeling effect here of valuing something, and that is critically important.

Not only should you organize the lessons for kids, and have their time scheduled so that they know when things are due, the teacher should model that. "You will get this in tomorrow, if you don't get it in, this is what will happen; there will be consequences." You assume that the kids will get the work in and they should, and you tell that you will get it back to them by Friday. It should include something other than smiley faces. They should have academic feedback.

*If you use individualized projects, they should be teacher controlled and organized.*

The same thing is true at the secondary level. We give kids an assignment and a month from now, two days before the project is due, we wonder why they have not started it. It is because they have not been given the sequence or the structure that they need to complete it. Very few students have that innate ability. We can teach them that, and they should become more independent in making those decisions. To assume that they will do it is a tragedy. So if you use individualized projects, they should be teacher controlled and organized.

"Today, I will check to see that the work materials relate to the lesson." Whether it is homework or seatwork, it should be directly related to what is being taught. Children should not be given new concepts to learn at home. Homework should be something that is comfortable for them, and it should be drill and practice. Concepts and learning occur at school with the help of the teacher.

*Homework should be something that is comfortable for them, and it should be drill and practice.*

Curriculum-Process..."Today, I will ask questions to be sure students are clear about information in the lesson." We use a lot of Madeline Hunter's work here.

Let me give you the titles of the other strategies which we work on. We work in the area of discipline. We do not advocate "quick-fix" discipline solutions. Certainly, we need short-time solutions to get started, but we focus on long-term behavioral changes, and how teachers can accomplish that. Unless you can make those changes for some students, they cannot get their engagement rates up.

During the project we also talk about expectations. There is an article on that subject called, "Your Praise Can Smother Learning" (see Appendix E, No. 5). I recommend this to you because it describes research on teacher expectations and the effect that praise has on success. What the writer argues is that we have overdone the "M & M's." Students are now expecting some reward for everything that they do. You ask them to do something, and they say, "Well, what do I get for it?" What can teachers do about this? The McREL project tries to answer that question. We talk about diagnosis and prescription, assessment strategies in the areas of reading and mathematics, and error diagnosis by teachers.

*We have overdone the "M & M's." Students are now expecting some reward for everything that they do.*

The fourth area we will get into is what we call the "Change Process." This is a very important area. We use the research on school change to develop our program.

We have learned, for example, that people working in teams have been far more successful than those working alone. Participants need that kind of support. We work with teams from the same school building.

On the handout, "Staff Development Research," there is an overview of some of Bruce Joyce's work (Appendix E, No. 6). He has done a very nice job of telling us why what we have done for the last 15 years has not been implemented most of the time.

If you start by telling people something, the best you can expect in terms of implementation is about 5 percent. When you tell and you demonstrate, note that it jumps to 10-15 percent, but still not a very good percentage at all. This is not very cost effective to get only 10 percent implementation.

The next step you tell, you demonstrate, and you practice. We do a lot of this: we tell teachers, we demonstrate, they practice, and we talk about it. We thought this would really make a difference. Yet 20 percent implementation is about the best that will occur.

*Coaching is a difficult role for the principal, because he/she also has an evaluative role, and the coach is more a supportive leader.*

Yet if you tell, demonstrate, practice, and coach, 80-90 percent implementation occurs. When we talk about coaching, someone onsite needs to play that role of coach. "O.K., we've got a hurdle. It isn't exactly as it was described. Why do we have the hurdle? What can we do to get over it? Maybe we'll be even stronger as a result of it." And so that coaching effort exists onsite, in a clinical supervision model, where there is academic, nonevaluative feedback to people who are implementing the program. That kind of support must be built into the program. Coaching is a difficult role for the principal, because he/she also has an evaluative role, and the coach is more a supportive leader. Still, someone must provide this type of leadership if the principal cannot. A district must be willing to support this function in order to carry out the program; otherwise, it is simply a waste of money.

Finally, we have a magazine that we publish for teachers. It it called Noteworthy. McREL's third Noteworthy is available. This issue focuses on school improvement. Another school improvement issue will be available next winter. You may order Noteworthy for $3.00 per copy.

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# PENNSYLVANIA'S LONG-RANGE PLANNING FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Excerpts by Dr. Kennard L. Bowman

There are many ways to move toward school improvement. As we look at the topic of school improvement problems, issues, and answers, I would like to brag about the things which we are doing well. I think it is important also that I acknowledge that there are certain places where we see the need for more progress. I have heard about several different strands of school improvement in the three days of the conference, and I think that they have many similarities.

***There are different approaches and processes, but I think all of us are moving in the same direction; we have the same general goals.***

In Pennsylvania, we have a written long-range planning requirement. This mandate is required of the 501 school districts once every five years. Essentially, what we are requiring of these 501 school districts once every five years is something called Long-Range Plan for School Improvement. Of course, we have an acronym, LRPSI.

We require our districts to follow a basic education planning model. If we were to do an analysis of all the different sections of this basic educational planning model, there would essentially be the same format, whether there are four steps, five steps, ten steps, or whatever number of steps--I don't think we can deviate too much from the model. Districts do a needs assessment, develop action plans, implement and evaluate those plans. How they do that is essentially local discretion provided they follow general guidelines which we have developed.

We found that many school districts said to us, "Why are you asking us to do these things? We are already doing them." We respond, "That is fine. We are not asking you to change what you are doing, since there is much local discretion on how to proceed with the plan. We would hope that you would continue doing the things in which you believe. Use this as an opportunity to reexamine and make necessary modifications."

In some districts we find the other extreme. We may get a lot of resistence. In many instances, those are the districts which have a disjointed curriculum. In response to allegations, we go into a district and ask to see the written curriculum; we find a lot of discomfort when there is no written curriculum. Nothing seems to tie the K-12 curriculum together, and every teacher essentially does his or her own thing. The Long-Range Plan for School Improvement has the potential to coordinate and articulate the curriculum, as well as to structure school management and other district operations.

*We are involved in an ambitious program which is both necessary, desirable, and overdue.*

In November of 1979, our Secretary of Education announced the school improvement plan to the Education Congress, a once a year occurrence which we have in Pennsylvania when all district superintendents come to Harrisburg for the State of Education update. Initially, 77 districts were identified to participate. We had a lot of resistance that first year. When we got to the second year and it was time for new districts, which was an additional 123, we went to Wave I District staff to serve as resources for the Wave II districts in addition to intermediate unit, higher education, and state department people. Much of that resistance during the first year had dissipated and early doubters had become some of our strongest advocates. We scheduled orientation meetings in each of our intermediate units. In Pennsylvania intermediate units are the primary regional service agency. We went to local superintendents, teachers, community members, and other administrators to ask if they would be on a panel to share their school improvement experiences.

We have made some progress in school improvement in Pennsylvania, but we have not been without our problems. It is interesting to come to West Virginia, and to learn that West Virginia has a judge who is going to solve school improvement for you. I will be watching your progress.

We are facing the same problems in Pennsylvania which you face in West Virginia. There is less money and we have had cutbacks at the state department. All those things hurt, but we feel we are going to make it.

The Long-Range Plan for School Improvement concept in Pennsylvania has helped us when we have been confronted with parents who have been disgruntled. A parent may come in and ask what we are doing, why we are doing it, and why we are not doing something else. The superintendent can answer that he/she did a needs assessment and on the basis of data made decisions about what priorities should be.

In addition, we have a statewide testing program called Educational Quality Assessment. In Pennsylvania it ties into Long-Range Planning for School Improvement. Too frequently, and rightfully so, we are accused in state departments of government of having too many mandates which represent duplications and therefore extra work for districts. We feel we are overcoming some of those problems with our long-range planning for schools, combined with statewide testing to show what we are doing and why we are doing it.

*Coming to one of these conferences, and hearing that other people are facing the same problems says to me that now is not the time to sit back and say, "It is not worth it," but now is the time to say, "This is the chance for a new beginning." It won't be the same as it was before.*

We have a commitment to provide technical assistance to local school districts. The Secretary of Education announced in 1979 that in a few years more than half of the professional staff in the Department of Education would be Field Representatives. Field reps are assigned to work with local school districts as one of their responsibilities. We now have 150 Field Representatives and meet with them once a month for staff development activities. When we talk in terms of 150 Field Representatives, I think that is one of the areas which we need to reexamine. It is very costly, particularly when one person must travel to a local school district, and it requires six or seven hours to travel to some districts.

The Field Representative is not expected to be the person who has all the answers when he/she goes to the local school district. That person is expected to be able to provide technical assistance or find somebody who can provide it. Field representatives represent one level of technical assistance. We have involved staff from each of our 29 intermediate unit people in the school improvement program. They are involved as school improvement resource people in the technical assistance network. This is working extremely well in some intermediate units. Later, you are going to hear more about technical assistance at the IU level.

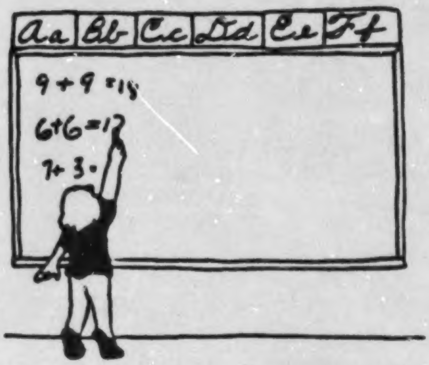
*We said this was going to be a partnership; we will need to involve all the different levels—together so we can do a better job than we can do separately.*

We have also involved the institutions of higher education. The institutions of higher education receive small amounts of money--$1,000 to $3,000 grants. One of the anxieties that many districts had in the first year was that they did not want college people coming into the district and telling them what to do. I recognize that there are many skilled people in colleges and that there are many resources that are available in colleges; however, before a college or university receives any money (and it is not a lot of money), the local school district had to request of the college the service that they had in mind. This would not be imposing college or university personnel upon the local school districts. This approach has worked well in many instances, and college people see it as an opportunity to work in the district in a positive way.

We met with the President of Shippensburg State College recently. He called the meeting and invited college people, state department people, intermediate unit people, and school district people. One of the outcomes of that meeting is a much better chance that local school district people will be going into the college classroom as resource people and vice versa. That type of exchange program always seems to make sense to me.

*When there is a strong, competent person at the college or university, he/she welcomes the opportunity to work with local district people. We see this as an opportunity for the future.*

We are reducing state mandates, which I believe is the right thing to do. As an example, to have the LRP plan approved, the Field Representative signs that a district had completed all sections of the written requirements. If that is done, the Long-Range Plan for School Improvement is accepted, and the district becomes "preregistered." In the past, when a written plan was submitted, it was distributed to eight or ten people in the Department of Education. Each person read the plan, made qualitative judgements about it, and sent a letter back to the local school district. Typically, the letter stated that we would like you to do this differently and we need more information. You can imagine that that did not please local school district people. Because of the mandate, they had to go along with it.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I think we have made some progress in the area of ownership of the plan. When the local district assumes ownership of the plan, the district educational program is likely to be enhanced and the state is relieved of many monitoring and regulatory functions.

In conclusion, we have five areas in the Pennsylvania School Improvement Plan. They include:

- programs and services,
- management,
- staff development,
- community involvement, and
- non-district resources.

Some of those sections are more important than others. In our effort to move rapidly, we have not been able to interrelate all five areas. We have found that the programs and services area and the management area need to be done concurrently. Failure to follow essential management practices will jeopardize program success. In addition, we consider school climate and the school effectiveness research to be integral components of school improvement.

Many things which I have heard at this conference reiterate that, "Yes, school improvement is important in the 1980s." We are interested in and committed to implementation and evaluation. Our school improvement plan is moving in that direction.

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# SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IN PENNSYLVANIA: AN INTERMEDIATE UNIT PERSPECTIVE

by Dr. John DeFlaminis

I would like to focus on three topics. First, I would like to briefly tell you what intermediate units are, because regional service organizations are not alike, and in fact, may not even be similar. Second, I will discuss the strengths of Pennsylvania's school improvement efforts as they are linked to programs in the past that have been featured at AEL. Finally, I will discuss school improvement needs, because I think the needs tie more directly to this program than the strengths do.

There are 29 intermediate units in Pennsylvania. Originally mandated to provide seven basic services, they now provide nine. Those services are:

- curriculum development and institutional improvement,
- management,
- continuing professional education,
- pupil personnel,
- instructional materials,
- state and federal agency liaison,
- educational planning,
- special education, and
- non-public services.

Our intermediate unit serves 3,300 square miles and our school districts range in size from 700 to 7,000 pupils. One of those districts is one of the seven smallest in Pennsylvania. Another is the largest geographic unit in the state and is larger than some of our smaller states in the country. It is 990 square miles in size and is one single district.

We are most unusual in that we can offer courses for credit which can be used for teacher certification. In effect, we do compete with universities in offering teacher courses which can be used for permanent certification. However, we enjoy good relations with

Pennsylvania State University which is in our service region. As I talk about the strengths and technical assistance partnerships, I think that we are especially lucky to have that resource. The technical assistance element has worked very well in our region, because we have been able to establish close relationships with our institutions of higher education.

*There are some major strengths that are most important from a local school district perspective and which, in my opinion, have been effective as we look across districts.*

What has not worked has occurred because there has not been a clear targeting of resources to needs. There is competition in some parts of our state, but not at the level of organization which identifies divisions of labor that could make something like a technical assistance partnership work. In our region all of us believe that each of us is not enough to serve the needs of the region. We do try to identify who can do the best job in a particular area of need. The resources represent a reasonable division of labor, a targeting of resources from the institution that can serve the particular needs of a school district.

The strengths in the School Improvement Program involve some understanding of educational history in Pennsylvania. The process was initiated in part to curtail the competency testing movement. There seems to have been a movement in the Legislature prior to our current secretary taking office which suggested that competency testing was coming. Since we have a very adequate and exemplary testing program in Educational Quality Assessment, there were field people, as well as the state legislators, who wanted to avoid competency testing. I think the school improvement process helped to avoid that movement.

The school improvement process does have a long history in Pennsylvania. Even though things tend to start with new secretaries of education, three or four outstanding programs were funded by the Federal Government seven or eight years ago. One of them was the Pennsylvania School Improvement process. So antecedents of the current school improvement program were, in fact, in place for a long time.

Our districts knew about long-range planning, but the long-range planning process this time tended to streamline and target some things that have worked quite well in the past. The ongoing five year cycle is reasonable in that this is enough time for long-range goals to be achieved, as well as to look at shorter range objectives, and then begin the whole cycle again to reconsider where the district might want to be at a certain point in the future.

*The school community has been involved, and that is a strength. In many cases the program has been very participative. That in itself in some of our small districts was a new experience. It has led to better and more cooperative relationships as the district moves ahead to implement a plan.*

Community involvement has been built into the plan. Naturally, if it is built into the plan, it tends to be emphasized. It has been emphasized in terms of parents looking at school improvement as a better way to understand the direction of their school districts. Also, it has been emphasized because of the parental involvement in community activities like needs assessments and the process of identifying particular learning directions in a district. Community involvement and the needs assessment process tend to be targeted to quality goal areas, i.e., to those goals where parents perceive the district should be spending time or giving attention.

For example, two of Pennsylvania's 12 Goals of Quality Education are not surprising. One is communication skills; the other is mathematics. But we have other quality goals which support the basics, like self-esteem. In our rural areas, self-esteem tends to be approached with almost equal emphasis to basic skills. Parents do perceive that there is a need for things like expectancy.

The emphasis of Pennsylvania's School Improvement Program has been on written curriculum. Curriculum Alignment, which Roger Scott discussed, mentions three components: assessment, objectives, and instruction. I can say that our school improvement process has focused on two.

As I indicated, we have an exemplary statewide testing program (Educational Quality Assessment [EQA]) which is not a competency testing program, but provides item analyses on quality goal areas. Teachers and administrators can look very carefully at the elements of their curriculum where their children are not achieving. Not only can they identify quality goal areas where their students are not achieving, but they can actually target the item clusters, the categories of knowledge, or the areas in that particular quality goal where achievement is dropping. They can also use the remainder of their testing program as another aspect of the tested curriculum.

The long-range plan has tended to direct school districts toward writing curriculum. That would be both one of its strengths and weaknesses. Because of the focus on the 12 goals, and because the needs assessment tended to be very closely related to the statewide testing program, districts lean towards writing curriculum as a major direction for the improvement of student achievement.

The third element which Roger mentioned has not been dealt with in a systematic way in Pennsylvania; that is, the instructional component. Barak Rosenshine's bottom line is "You get what you teach for." I would modify that for needs assessment—you get what you assess for. In our case, our assessment leads us to written curriculum. Susan Everson discussed a process which she did not call needs assessment, but was a source of gathering data in the first part of CEMREL's school improvement process. Her focus was not written curriculum, but rather key aspects of instruction. I think this improvement process offers a very important piece which Pennsylania not only needs, but is missing. Because our state is large, it does not mean that many of the things which we have seen are not in place somewhere. The problem is that those things are not systematically in place, and they are systematically addressed by few districts.

Some examples where instructional improvement programs are in place do exist in our state. Time on task has been promoted by Research for Better Schools in many of the urban and suburban districts. A major site for Chicago Mastery Learning is in Philadelphia. Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement (TESA) has been available in Pennsylvania for many years. This year training was offered statewide.

Madeline Hunter has consulted with the City of Pittsburgh: and the superintendent, a former R & D director himself, has used Madeline Hunter's framework in determining the direction of the Pittsburgh schools. Interestingly, the direction has a primary focus on instruction. He explained in a recent meeting that he was more interested in instruction, because he felt that results will be seen much faster than with writing curriculum. He was not putting down the long-range planning process in Pennsylvania, but his experience dictated the need to focus on instructional issues.

Jane Stallings has held an information awareness in our intermediate unit, but we have no active sights yet. As I have indicated, Fenwick English has made a major impact on our state with a process similar to curriculum alignment. There is much overlap. Fenwick English has worked with many of the intermediate units to assist with curriculum mapping. When considering curriculum alignment (or curriculum management), we have made progress.

There are other needs in our state. Seeing the whole picture in planning has to be one of the greatest needs. Ken Bowman mentioned the link between programs and services and management; I will emphasize staff development.

Sometimes a plan for programs and services is developed only to find that a staff development component is necessary but cannot be built in at an adequate level to address the program planned. Every program is staff development intensive, and yet staff development is a little emphasized part of the long-range plan. It tends to be considered after programs and services and management which draw most of the attention and resources in a district. Unfortunately, staff development may be the most critical section, and yet it is seldom integrated effectively into the plan which a district might develop. In fact, I have seen districts develop plans only to find later that funding cuts eliminated the staff development resources and key amounts of time that were needed to implement the plans, even before the plans were submitted for approval. That is not a phenomenon that is unique to Pennsylvania. I think we have all experienced cutbacks and find that staff development tends to be a very sensitive area and one that is easily cut.

*I think a lot of the programs that we have seen through AEL have focused on some of the factors and the key issues in implementation. It has been very helpful for us. I can say that it has helped me to anticipate some of the consequences which might be coming.*

There is another major area of need which I would like to underscore. We give a lot of attention to planning, and give less attention to implementation and evaluation. I am very concerned about that in my role as a technical assistor. Our roles in helping districts in the planning stages requires minimal time involvement. I am more concerned about the time requirement later to provide implementation and evaluation assistance, which I see as far more formidable. I am gravely concerned about the degree to which not only our districts but the technical assistors, ourselves included, understand the implementation issues which are there.

The last thing that I would emphasize has to do with technical assistance; that is, the efficient use of technical assistors. Sometimes we are brought in to assist, but we are not used appropriately. Occasionally we are brought in to assist when it is too late. Things have already happened, and the problem is already there, and it is even more of a problem than we can mediate. We may be brought in to assist after the planning has taken place when in fact we might have contributed to a much better plan had our involvement occurred earlier.

I have lived in a lot of states, and I find the quality of education in Pennsylvania to be extraordinary. If I have tended to emphasize some needs, it is because Ken Bowman started by talking about questions. There is an old quote that says, "A person's learning usually passes through three stages. In the beginning the person learns the right answers. In the second stage the person learns the right questions. In the third and final stage, the person learns which questions are worth asking." I guess we are at the stage where we are just beginning to learn the right questions, and I see that as a step in the right direction.

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# CABELL ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

by Ms. Carolyn Hayford

*It is important that our students are rewarded for education. They prefer to be with us.*

The neighborhood where Cabell Alternative School is located is on a main highway. Many people drive through that neighborhood on their way to work each morning. Imagine yourself driving by and seeing great big hulking people who looked like escapees from Pruntytown or one of our child shelters sitting on the steps smoking cigarettes, and just kind of "hanging around." They would be out there for half an hour or forty-five minutes, and if you drove by the second time, you would wonder what they were doing there. If you ask questions, someone would say, "They are students of Cabell."

Sometimes they may be out in the street revving up their car engines. It is never clear when they have the hood up if they are working on the car or hot-wiring it. It could be either, because many of them are very experienced in that area.

We had a student in our school recently who went into a neighborhood funeral parlor with his brother. One of the brothers entertained the funeral director, while the other one went into the room where the young lady was laid out. There was a very valuable ring on her finger, and the student took the ring. It was never found, but we know he took it.

These are the kinds of students who are enrolled in Cabell School, but all the students are not like that. We are an alternative to the regular school situation, and the students are not dangerous.

In times past, there have been students who were enrolled in our program because they were on probation. The only way they could stay free was to promise to go to school. About a month before facing the judge, they would become hardworking creatures with perfect attendance so that we would give good evaluations about their behavior and could comment on their attitude changes. They would get a good report and their probation would either be extended or ended. Then they would not come back to school. Sometimes we did not see them again ever, because we would get word that they were incarcerated.

These are students who are troubled. Some of them are young women who got into trouble and had to drop out of school. They are not bad, they just wanted to change their lives.

Now the environment at Cabell Alternative School has changed. Two years ago--before we organized it under its present structure--its orientation was adult vocational. It was known for its "hanging around" students.

Changes had to be made, because the school was run by two counselors who were benevolent counselors. (You have heard of benevolent dictators.) The counselors felt that the students could be changed by preaching to them. They kept the Bible on the desk, preached sermons to them, and patted them on the head. These are knife-yielding kids, and all they did was laugh.

*Their attitudes were not changed, but they could put up a good front. Something had to be done because the students were dictating the atmosphere, and no learning was taking place, or the wrong kind of learning was taking place.*

The superintendent of schools ordered the school closed because of so many neighborhood complaints. The people did not want those young men hanging around. They felt threatened, and rightly so in some cases.

Apparently, there was a secondary administrator in the county who recognized the need to have an alternative to the traditional classroom. This person went to the Board of Education and talked to the superintendent. The superintendent agreed to keep the school open if the structure of that school could be changed.

A top-notch administrator for the school was hired. He is very low-key--never gets too upset about anything until it reaches a head and then he takes action.

One of the things that had to be changed was the discipline in the school. Believe it or not, I was the teacher brought in to become the heavy hand. We had a meeting with the counselors who had been serving as disciplinarians, and with the teachers who could not function with the counselors. My role was to discipline directly through the administrators.

It was not unusual to have confrontations three or four times a day with some groups of male students. I assigned them all kinds of work. They had respect for someone who seemed to care about them, and our faculty did care. We have been lucky not to have been hit or attacked. I am not saying that it will not happen someday.

We very, very slowly changed the structure of that school. The first thing we did was to begin keeping a time sheet for the students. This time sheet had 15-minute and 5-minute blocks of time. When the students arrived at school, they signed in with their home room teacher and this became their time ticket. It was like punching a time clock. They

*High school credit is important to the students because if any of these students are not with us, they will be in Pruntytown, or they will be in the Dunbar Child Shelter, or incarcerated somewhere, and not allowed to go free.*

accounted for every minute that they were in school. There was a 10 minute break between classes to give them a chance to go smoke a cigarette or get a package of potato chips or whatever they needed between classes. But if they did not have this sheet, which was stamped and documented by their previous teacher, they could not enter the next class.

We made notes, and the students were credited only for class time. If we found that they were gossiping, playing, or doing something other than their academic work, they were docked for this time.

These students, for one reason or another, had chosen to be in our school. They had to earn the credit hours required. They did not, as in your school, have to be present a certain number of days. In our school they must put in 150 hours of classroom time, and there must be good, adequate work. They must also be able to pass the tests that we give. After 150 hours of work, they are given one year of high school credit.

Not only do they have to put in a certain number of hours, but they also have to complete a required amount of work. We have had students who have put in their time. It is very difficult to tell what is on their minds. We document the time that they spend with academics, but sometimes they fool us because they really are not doing anything. We have had students who have finished the hours, but have not finished the work.

*We established requirements and we talk about those requirements with the students. The students know that if they do not complete the work that they will not get credit for the course. This student was proud of having been made to accomplish something, and made to do it well.*

I had a confrontation early this year with a student who was a carry-over from last year. He thought that he had put on a good show, and that he had made everyone think he had done his work. I said, "Roger, you have not finished your workbook, and you cannot get credit until you finish it." He said, "I'll go to the superintendent of schools, I'll go to the principal, I'll go to the Board of Education."

I said, "You go right ahead, but I'm the teacher and I am in control. They will not give you the grade; I will give you the grade. When you have finished the task that was assigned to you, I will give you the grade."

He said, "I want my grade now. I finished my hours."

I said, "Okay, I will give you a grade now, but it will be an E." He left, but he came back on lunch hour. I figured there were about 15 hours remaining on that book. He came back and completed the work. Now he feels proud of it. Because he was made to do something, he ended up getting a grade of B, which was probably the highest grade he had ever received in a math course. He was proud of having been made to accomplish something, and made to do it well.

We have an interesting story about some old outdated calculators that came to us by way of the State Department of Education. We got the calculators all fixed up to use in our math course. The kids loved them. They enjoyed math when they used those calculators. We did not think about locking them up; who would want them. For $10.00 a very small one that can be carried in a pocket can be bought. We do have a lot of people who need extra money and get it in a lot of different ways, but I thought no one would bother stealing the old calculators, since they were not worth anything.

We had a breaking and entering one weekend, and everything was taken out of the desk. Nothing was left except the calculators. We laughed about it, because the thieves did not want the calculators. The next weekend the thieves came back and broke out a window only big enough for a small person to crawl through. They broke out the little panels in the window, and took the calculators.

On Monday morning, we called the police. An hour later the principal got a phone call from someone offering to sell him the calculators back for $75.00. We feel sure that it was someone from within the school, but we didn't have any proof.

We do not have a lot of data on the research that we have done, but what we have done is change the atmosphere in that classroom. We discipline the students, and they report to class now.

There are about five rules that must be enforced. One of them is to stop the "hanging around." The counselors in times past have allowed the students to come into the school, take their five minutes to smoke their cigarettes, and get ready for the day. We stopped that, because the five minutes turned into 10-15-20-25 minutes. The students just never quite made it to class.

When the students are within sight of the school building, even if they are across the street, or at the end of the fence, or at the corner, they must come into the school building and report to the classroom immediately. If they do not, we turn them out; we have that option.

The students need to earn the credit, so if they are not in school, they are not earning the hours, and they do not get the credit that they want. They are rewarded for being allowed to come to school, their punishment is being sent away for some misbehavior or for breaking the rules.

One problem that the students had was returning after break. On the hour, the students are allowed to take a 10 minute break to get to the next classroom. We had a problem getting the students to return on time. The bell rings at 10 minutes after the hour, and that is the students' signal to begin moving to the classroom. When the big hand goes past the black mark at 15 after the hour, even if it is only 20 seconds past, we point this out to them. It is made clear that when that hand goes past that black mark on the clock, that they must be in their classroom.

They believe that they can talk their way into the classroom. "I had to make a phone call; I had to go to the bathroom and had to wait in line; I was smoking a cigarette and didn't quite have it finished." They could come up with all kinds of tales. We took none of that. We said you have a time limit, and you know exactly when you are to be here. We had a lot of arguments about this, but we established the rule, and they could not get by with breaking it. Now the students are back in the classroom as soon as the bell rings.

The next rule is probably the only rule we changed this year that made a difference. We have knowledge that we have a drug problem. The students are street-wise. We found that they were smoking pot, and sometimes we would even catch them with their joints. They would go off behind the building and smoke. We knew they were making sales.

They go through the county drug rehabilitation program where they are suspended for five days from the school, and they do not like that. They have to go to school at night to learn why they should not smoke pot or use drugs or do other things.

We have caught many of them behind the doors making sales. They were allowed to go to the parking lot, and this was where their drugs were stashed. They also had alcohol and they would go out and have a beer, make a quick entrance, and then come back inside. We stopped them from going to the parking lot. We felt that if we removed them from the access, that would be progress toward a solution to the problem. We closed the campus and we would not let the kids go outside the fence. Now these were big adults, but we said that when they came inside the fence, that was it! They could not leave. If one foot was stepped outside the fence, they were gone for the day. They chanced this a few times. They would stick their foot out, and we would say goodbye.

One day a kid was out near the base and someone took his hat and threw it over the fence, and he had to go get it. I walked out there to the parking lot where he was getting his hat. I asked what he was doing out there, and he said he was going home. He knew better than to say someone had thrown his hat over the fence.

*But he is a good kid, not a bad kid. I have no idea what he did; all they want is a chance.*

We had a fellow the other day who came to school, and we still do not know what he did, but it must have been quite serious. As he walked out the door someone gave him the signal. I heard one of my students say that the police were waiting for him. But that kid did not wait. He was up and over the fence and out and gone. We have not seen hide nor hair of him since. The police are still waiting for him, and they will find him someday.

Academically, we have done wonders with these kids. I will give you a couple of statistics.

At the end of this year, we had 183 credit students; 42 of those returned to their home schools. We will begin issuing diplomas next year. We had the authority from the State Department of Education this year to issue diplomas, but so far we have not had one who was not eligible for graduation from his home school.

We have had 79 of the 183 return to their home schools. This means that they will continue in their home schools next year.

*For whatever reason they were sent to our school, there was no alternative. They can now go back to their home schools and finish their education there.*

We have a few students who are returning to Cabell Alternative School. Some of these are behavioral disorderly kids who are with us because they cannot function in the traditional classroom. Some of them are there because of drug abuse, and they must stay with us for two semesters. A few of those students will return to their home school next year.

We have had 24 dropouts, and we have had only 6 students out of this group who were dismissed. The problem usually is fighting, and we do not have very many of those. We have stopped most of it.

I could go on, I could tell you stories forever, and I could give you data on the things we have done, but you really need to come to the school and see us. I invite all of you to visit us. Just walk in the door someday, and be there with us. Do not come dressed up, do not come as a visitor; come as yourself.

Many of you have come to our picnic. We are getting quite a reputation, because we work in public relations. We want a lot of people to come into our school. The first year that we were there we hosted a luncheon. Can you imagine having dinner for 200 people in a building where there is no kitchen? We do have a sink in the room where we serve the lunch. We have no kitchen, no stove, nothing, and yet we take everyone. It has been established as a yearly event, and we really enjoy it. The kids participate in it. They go through the lines with our guests.

There are so many things that we do for them that I cannot begin to tell you about all of them. But what I wanted to do today was to tell you that we are here in Kanawha County. We invite you to come and talk to us about what we do. We care about these kids, and I think that is the key to the things that we have been able to do.

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# USING EFFECTIVE TEACHING/SCHOOL RESEARCH IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

by Dr. Mary Marockie

I am delighted to share with you information about a project with which I have been working for approximately a year. First, since all of you are not from West Virginia, I would like to explain the Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) in West Virginia. Our RESA is located near Pittsburgh in the northern part of West Virginia where we serve the northern panhandle counties. We are an agency of about 12 people. My area of concern is curriculum and teacher education, so one of our primary goals is to make educators in our region aware of some of the newest trends in education. I would like to share with you how we have been doing this and our involvement in a project titled "The North Park Venture."

In our RESA, we produce a Teacher Education Digest (TEC Digest), which is a publication of digested articles for teachers and educators in our region. We send out over 2,000 publications five times a year. Also in the Digest, we highlight pilot research, and we summarize it for teachers and educators in our region.

Over the last two years, we have been summarizing the findings of the Effective Teaching and Effective Schools research and have condensed much of the research in the Digest. Along with that, for the last five years we have conducted a major convention for all the educators in our region. The major focus this past year was a strand on Effective Teaching and Effective Schools research.

I would like to alert you to a good presentation that you may want to include at your county or district level. At our convention, we had an ASCD tape on Effective Teaching and Effective Schools research. It was a suberb, well-done tape which we used with the principals and teachers in our region. I would recommend it if you are interested in a very succinct way to get research across to people at the awareness stage which is how we used it. Also, there is an excellent book which I have used called Time to Learn. This book gives an excellent summary on the time-on-task studies.

The North Park Venture is a name which we gave to a project in a small primary school in Wheeling, West

Virginia. The school has 8 teachers, 140 students, and a dynamic leader. It is a flexible, open school which is very crucial to what we have done in that school. The fact that this school is open has contributed to the success of the venture.

*The scores were very important, but we needed to look at the other variables in the school.*

In May of last year, the principal of this school came to me and said that her school had been targeted for improvement. The test scores were somewhat low in that school, and that was a factor in the targeting of that particular school for the next year. I said that I thought that we needed to look at variables other than the test scores. That is when I began discussing more specifically with the principal the research which I thought would apply to North Park. From that point on, she was very interested, and has read all the research information that I have given her.

There is an administrative chain out of the central office that works directly with the North Park staff. The administrative team in this case usually consisted of the math supervisor, the language arts supervisor, the testing supervisor, and the assistant superintendent in charge of instruction.

*From the very beginning, we said that the teachers are experts on their grade level, on their material, and, therefore, we needed them to make curriculum decisions.*

They would come in periodically as a group of colleagues. I must stress that point, that we respected the teachers in this climate as colleagues and not subordinates. If another role is taken, the teachers, in my opinion, will not become the curriculum experts which should be expected of them.

We have done curriculum congruence which is what today has been called curriculum alignment. There is a very sophisticated plan in the county, but in this school, it was even more sophisticated. We had been matching the skills of CTBS, the state's test, with the curriculum. We took the philosophy that you never go into battle without armor. Therefore, it was our philosophy that every child needed to be equipped to the fullest potential, and we did not want to make the test a surprise. We did not teach the test, but we did teach the processes of that test throughout the year. There are counties in West Virginia doing that in a very splendid manner.

Four basic strands of research were basic to the school's program. We focused on a narrow part of those strands in view of the fact that it was an initial project. Those strands were:

- structured learning environment,
- academic feedback,

- high teacher/high student expectations, and
- time-on-task.

I would like to discuss very briefly each of these areas, tell you about the results, and what we hope to attain in year two.

*The spelling sections of CTBS has a definite format. We made sure that the students were familiar with that same format so they could answer many of those spelling test items. We did not want to surprise them. We equipped them to fight the battle. That is our responsibility as educators.*

## Structured Learning Environment

We made some very basic decisions about North Park. We attempted to organize the environment even down to the number of bulletin boards in the building. (Too many bulletin boards were over-stimulating to us as adults, and we felt that they were also over-stimulating to children.)

We had no pull out programs. No children were ever pulled out of the school day. We chose not to send any child in special education to another school.

We had no student teachers, because we did not want anybody in the building that we had to train further. Also, we did not want anybody in the building who was not directly supervised by the school system, especially prestudent teachers. It was very important that we not contaminate what we were effecting at that point.

The focus was on whole group instruction from the standpoint that whole group instruction followed two basic components. This construct of learning had to be always followed by correction and individualization. Therefore, we had to make a decision on the reading program. We chose one reading program which fit into our model beautifully, especially the concept of remediation and individualization. We chose to use a program in the first grade that encompassed this philosophy at least to some degree. We did the same thing in mathematics in the kindergarten, and in the first grade, second grade, and third grade. We supported the concept that 90 percent of the students in the school can learn well. We know that some of them learn more slowly than others, but we accepted Bloom's research, which cites that 15 percent more time is needed by some children to master a skill. This time was provided through a reteach and preteach cycle. Our remediation was based on reteaching/preteaching the very same material.

## Academic Feedback

We worked a great deal on making sure that teachers were aware of the fact that they should give parents as well as the children a great deal of information. We sent home three newsletters to parents about the skills that the child would be learning this week, next week, and the next week. There is a direct mailing to parents to make them feel that they are an invested part of the school venture.

## Expectations

*I think that if they took a climate test, they would be rated as a positive climate school because of the positive expectations.*

North Park draws from a variety of students. It is a beautiful little school, but many of the students come from an area that did not have a high economic level. For some reason, the staff initially felt that some of the children may not be successful. That view was stopped immediately through the dynamic leadership of the principal. The principal maintained strongly, "These children will learn; we will spot these children; we'll do everything possible."

An analysis of the textbooks in the school determined which content was relevant and which content was not relevant. But in addition to that, superfluous tasks in books were discussed: should you do 20 problems rather than 10 problems, should you do 20 skill pages versus 5 skill pages.

The teachers began to make decisions. The staff collectively, under the direction of the principal, made decisions. This was the very key to this venture.

In the area of social studies and science, the teachers made the decision that they no longer would be teaching social studies and science in a textbook for third graders only. Larger units of instruction were developed--two each semester, one in science and one in social studies. The social studies unit was directly related to the skills of the CTBS.

## Time-on-Task

We have done a great deal of study on analyzing the time component in the school--what would be taught at what time and how many minutes. Because it is an open school, the decisions were made collectively. In an open school, there must be work with partners. This particular school helped us facilitate this process.

There was consideration on how many minutes would be part of the whole group instruction. It is very crucial in this program that children have so many minutes teaching time.

***A teacher is teaching a particular skill, the other teacher is monitoring the students at that time; the students, not the teacher, are monitored to find out if the students are answering the questions that deal with that skill.***

The monitoring phase is one of the unique parts of our program. We had teams of teachers in each subject area. The teachers were excellent. We had one teacher teaching and the other teacher monitoring. That was the key. They exchanged the monitoring components. As an example, one day the students were in a circle. The teachers were standing and the children sitting. I said, "Do you realize what you've done to the children? It's great when you are forty years old, but not when you are five years old." The children were straining their necks, and consequently they always looked up at the teachers. She was not aware that it was happening. When she stepped down and she was at eye-level with the children, they in turn responded to her in a much more positive manner. That was one example of monitoring. We also have done monitoring in different parts of the reading program. We need to work much more in this particular area.

Whether you agree with the philosophy or not, in West Virginia we are evaluated strongly on test results. We are evaluated by the public on test results. Our scores are published widely in West Virginia, and it is a way to establish public education in one way or the other. We have no choice but to accept it. Therefore, test results are crucial to a school system.

***Absolutely, the discipline in the school has almost been extinguished in terms of behavior problems.***

I remember when the test was given at the spring period. We spotted nine children in the third grade that needed direct eye contact in the test. They were pulled out, put in a closed situation, and the principal monitored those tests. These nine children were equipped at that point to make sure that they understood what they were doing. They were not lost in the shuffle. We felt that it was imperative to allow a child to have an optimum testing situation.

We are analyzing unobtrusive data in the school. We are looking at the number of volunteer inservice meetings that these teachers attend, the number of skills learned, and discipline referrals.

Next year, we hope to refine our feedback techniques. We hope to work specifically in our units so that they will be transferable to other schools. We hope to analyze our text in a more sophisticated fashion. Our monitoring has to become much more refined and much more systematic. Finally, we need to locate the individual tasks of the students, and consider how well they are being monitored.

This is an example of the North Park Venture. I am really excited about it, I think it has a great deal of potential. It's success is primarily because of the efforts of a very dynamic principal's willingness to learn and a staff committed to the effort.

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# EFFECTIVE SCHOOLING: CONFERENCE SYNTHESIS

by Dr. Joseph C. Basile II

Let me begin by saying that I appreciate the opportunity to spend some time with you this morning, sharing my perceptions regarding this forum. Of most importance in the next couple of hours is that we, together, share impressions, concerns, and issues. I would hope that we can establish a dialogue between and among you, the audience, and the panel.

We had an excellent panel this morning. Also, most of the other conference presenters are still with us today. Therefore, the potential for an outstanding sharing--conference synthesis--is excellent.

My primary goal this morning is to pull together some of the common threads and strands that cut across all of the excellent presentations in the various sessions in which we have been. My intent is to share my perceptions and receive your perceptions. Although my remarks may not be profound--and that is not my intent--I hope that you will find some statements that are provocative. Furthermore, I want to speak as a member of the West Virginia Department of Education and a member of the profession of education, which I believe to be one of the most important professions, if not the most important profession, in this country. I hope that you share this value of importance because what we, collectively, say, do, and make happen in this profession is the investment in tomorrow.

***If you look at the logo on the back of the program, you will find that it says a great deal about what has taken place at AEL in this workshop and over the last two or three years.***

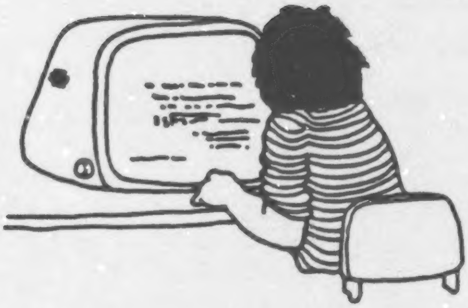
Let's consider the goal for the forum. The major goal specified at the beginning of the conference was to provide participants with information about three R&D-based projects that were designed to facilitate effective schooling. The supporting objectives were:

- encourage the participants to replicate selected R&D-based school improvement projects through in-state workshops;
- provide presenters and researchers with information regarding the school effectiveness concerns of participants; and
- promote dialogue, contact, and collaboration between and among presenters, researchers, forum participants, and AEL staff.

If you look at the logo on the back of your forum program, you will find that it says a lot about what has taken place, not only in this workshop, but over the last two or three years at AEL. AEL has presented a program that exemplifies that logo--the linkage of three elements: educational practice, educational research, and educational development in a very effective manner.

Initially, AEL has another smashing success on their hands. The forum presenters and this morning's panel are to be commended for the kinds of things which they have shared with you. They have demonstrated the expertise for which they are known. Please notice I use the word expertise. You have had the opportunity to hear and share with the experts in their field; that is extremely important. We were, as forum receivers, very fortunate because we have had presenters that have data to back-up what they share with us. Again, I want to commend the presenters, the panel members, and AEL staff for a quality product.

Secondly, you must know what my biases are, because those are the screens through which I see things and those biases have a tendency to color my beliefs, values, and therefore my actions. I believe in the following:



- learners and learner-based decisioning;
- teachers;
- American educational system, public and private, is the best in the world; (If you don't believe it, please read Wolfe's book, Intelligence in America.)
- systematic approach that takes processes to valuable, informative, and workable outcome-based products; and
- all of us--teachers, administrators, principals, supervisors, representatives of state education agencies, institutions of higher education, local education agencies, regional educational agencies, teacher education centers, and labs and centers--are in this together.

Please note that I said we are all in this together--no one--no organization is any more important than any other. I believe that it is critical that we recognize that fact above all else. I believe that sometimes we forget the power of unity and have a tendency to play games with each other that are counterproductive.

Speaking of counterproductivity, I believe it is important to know and share with you those things that I have a difficult time in working with or understanding:

- lip service,
- platitudes,
- generalities,
- doom and gloom,
- negativism, and
- counterproductive action.

***I have a difficult time with lip service, platitudes, generalities, doom and gloom, negativism, and counterproductive action.***

Now let us examine what we have heard the past few days. If you listened closely to Dr. Roy Truby, State Superintendent of Schools in West Virginia, in the introduction to this forum, you had the opportunity to share with him the pain and anguish at the top in the real world of education and politics. That is the way it really is in the front chair. You heard comments regarding a judge's decision. But you also heard of his support for labs and centers, of his beliefs in school effectiveness, school improvement, and climate, and his beliefs in curriculum alignment. Dr. Truby supports these kinds of activities, not only verbally, but with time and funds. His actions exemplify his beliefs in collaboration with AEL, local superintendents, and regional and local education agency personnel. We have, in West Virginia, four major R&D projects in teacher effectiveness, computer mathematics, Chicago Mastery Learning, and Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement (TESA). Those projects are expanding within and multiplying into other counties. Furthermore, those R&D projects include rather substantive control group research designs.

Dr. Jack Sanders' remarks were extremely important in setting the context for this forum. Not only his remarks, but his actions demonstrate beyond question his commitment to the logo. As I sat there thinking about the kinds of things that people are saying about labs, good and not so good, I began to think about the past four or five years. I thought about the labs before that period of time. I wondered, "Could the meetings that have been taking place for the last three of four years (labs and centers) have taken place five years ago, six years ago, seven years ago?" I do not think so. Researchers are taking the time to help us. I doubt that would have happened in the past for the simple reason that I am not so sure they had the time or that they could take the time. But then, I do not think we were very good listeners either. We had the tendency in public education to look at research much as we looked at our friends in higher education. They cannot help us! They cannot understand! That just is not true today. The kinds of things (R&D) that have occurred in the last decade, in the late 70's, and this part of the 80's, have been very constructive and productive with regard to collaboration and cooperation in the R&D community and higher education. That has become the expected and not the rarity. Researchers and higher education personnel are willing to help and we are willing to listen and act based on the quality of data and findings.

> *We had the tendency in public education to look at research much as we looked at our friends in higher education. The kinds of things that have occurred in the last decade, in the late 70's, and this part of the 80's, have been very constructive and productive with regard to collaboration and cooperation. That has become the expected and not the rarity.*

Sandra Orletsky's remarks were very apropo in relation to Hutchinson's managing school problems for the 80's. Consider the conceptual structure of communications, strategic planning, sharing the resources, and the relationship of R&D and coalition building. Those are the kinds of things we are going to have to address.

Dr. Susan Everson and the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory are to be commended for pulling together school effectiveness research in terms of teacher effectiveness research at the classroom level and the building level. If you consider her remarks about the history of school improvement and effectiveness research, she is right. The research in the 60's was an absolute disaster; it was destructive and nonproductive. If we look at the curriculum kinds of things that went down the tubes along with the research, then we have an idea of what happened in the 70's, and how hard researchers are working to help us today.

If we look back to the school effectiveness research, they did the same thing that the teacher effectiveness people did. I remember making a statement at one time that if you want to see a good teacher, go find one; see what they do. The same idea applies. If you want to see a good school, go find one; watch what they do in that school. Dr. Everson and company have done just that. They have collected information about teachers, teaching, and schools over a long period of time. Their work has led to the very same constructive, dynamic, and productive findings during the late 70's and early 80's.

You heard Dr. Everson make the statement that school effectiveness is not cosmetic. You cannot do one or two things. You must be cognizant of the gestalt, the big picture. There must be movement on a broad front relative to teacher effectiveness, school effectiveness, and school improvement. We must be aware of the interaction between and among these components. Additionally, we must be aware and think about the interaction of other subcomponents: educational leadership, school climate, curriculum alignment, assessment, and program development and improvement. Essentially, we must attend to, in a systematic fashion, many of the variables that we have heard consultants and Jack Sanders talking about during the past three days. You cannot do just one thing--that is the cosmetic treatment that Dr. Everson speaks about. Seriously, if you have listened closely, it is amazing how the variables, bits and pieces, interact between and among and fit very well.

***You heard Dr. Everson make the statement that school effectiveness is not cosmetic. One or two things cannot be done; there must be a gestalt, the big picture.***

The consultants have suggested certain cautions about what the research data really seem to indicate. For example, you may hear administrators, school board members, lay citizens, and some professional educators running around saying, "Time-on-task--that is what we need. We have to have time-on-task because that is what the research says!" Research data do not say that at all! The research data seem to indicate that time-on-task, quality of teaching, quality of materials, and student motivation make a difference. You can work on only one variable, but don't be disappointed when you get a small payoff or no payoff instead of a large payoff for your efforts invested. When you really get down to the nitty gritty, if you will, it is not time-on-task nor assigned time, but Academic Learning Time (ALT) that makes the difference. The ALT that we lose, for whatever reason, can never be regained.

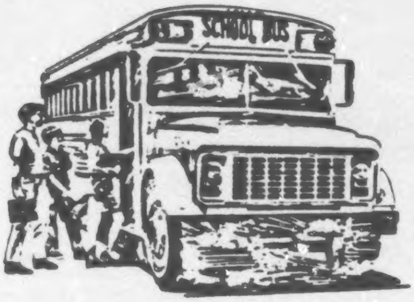
***I believe when students win, we cannot lose.***

Dr. Everson made some very cogent remarks about testing, and I'll speak to those later. She was right on target if you recall one of the last transparencies she shared with us. When you articulate the text, academic learning time, tests, and school leadership, you can have dramatic positive impact on achievement, morale, and control. Those positive effects will happen when students win. We do not like to lose and neither do students. When students lose, all of us in this profession lose.

Now let us consider what we have heard during the sessions in this morning's panel. As I listened to the panel this morning, I began to think about six words that are very important to me when I begin a programmatic task. Those words I would like for you to think about are design, develop, implement, monitor, evaluate, and reconceptualize. Those words are beneficial when you try to synthesize something like this forum. In the beginning I thought about these questions:

- How will I categorize the data/information I collect for the synthesis? and
- What is the most effective way to present the information?

What I would like to do is review the three major presentations--curriculum alignment, school climate, and school improvement--in terms of people, processes, products, and specific presentation highlights while keeping in mind those six words: design, develop, implement, monitor, evaluate, and reconceptualize. Consider the vertical axis as people, processes, products, and highlights; and on the horizontal axis, curriculum alignment, school climate, and school improvement. Now when you visualize this four by three matrix and begin to fill in the spaces with regard to what we have heard and the materials we have received from presenters, some very interesting findings begin to surface.



All the presentations highlighted the importance of administrators, teachers, and resource personnel working together as a team; and the school climate project involved students and community leaders. Presenters emphasized the importance of upfront, public written commitment. That in and of itself speaks highly of the professional expertise of these presenters and the personnel involved in these projects. Everyone knows what their duties and responsibilities are from the first day of the programmatic endeavor.

*Change does not occur overnight. Change occurs very, very slowly.*

Next, it is evident that there are no quick fixes. Each one of these programmatic efforts involves time--multiple-year involvement--if you are going to be true to the program intervention. Roger Scott of Southwest Regional Laboratory indicated the multiple-year involvement needed for curriculum alignment. Although school climate specifies a six to twelve month timeline, an analysis of the school climate instrumentation clearly delineates multiple-year involvement in terms of follow-up action. Dr. Everson was very clear about what she and her organization will not do. They will not talk to one person about a quick fix process. Dr. Everson insists on a two-year written commitment.

Essentially, the involvement of all educational personnel, lay citizenry, and the need for blocks of time illustrates, at just a casual glance, that change occurs very, very slowly. If we are to be successful and precipitate high payoff, we must be cognizant that small commitments, tradition, and convention will not get us where we want to go. There are no quick fixes. The expertise of a collaborative, collegial group working on a program intervention will enhance the possibility of success. Consider the brainstorming exercises we participated in during the past three days. I would like to have gathered all of the brainstorming session lists, taken them back to the office, and had them typed for future reference. There were many good ideas that came out of the brainstorming sessions. Those ideas form the basis for the kinds of processes and products that back up the larger systems, program interventions.

*School improvement is based on R&D. This is perception data verified by observation, curriculum alignment kinds of things, and attendance.*

Consider, if you will, the assessment-driven system potential of these three programs and how systematic they are in reality. The instrumentation, process/ product orientation, forces the issue of making decisions based on data. For example, in curriculum alignment, a high priority is placed upon identifying and prioritizing instructional intent, and then designing instructional plans that match those instructional intents for the purpose of monitoring the progress and the implementation plan, and helping educational personnel identify accomplishments and subsequent plans for next year's work. Essentially, one must align and articulate curriculum so that there is a match between and among objectives, instruction, and assessment--if you want high achievement by students.

The school climate model is an eight-step process that includes a committee of volunteers. After the formation of the committee, their first task is to secure baseline data. Then the awareness/orientation kinds of things are initiated before the existing school climate is assessed, and before priorities are structured for consideration by a task force management team (volunteer committee) for the purpose of systematic implementation and summative evaluation.

The school improvement model is a six-step planning process: assessment, training, program implementation, research and data analysis, supervision, and evaluation. This planning process is focused around the areas of teaching, curriculum, assessment, building level leadership, and organizational management.

One may want to ask, "What kinds of products do we get from all of these systematic assessment procedures?" In the area of curriculum alignment we get the following:

- a list of skills, knowledge, and attitudes we want to teach;
- decisions relative to time allocation;
- curriculum scope and sequence;
- curriculum articulation (vertical and horizontal);
- feedback regarding student accomplishments; and
- feedback relative to our instructional plan.

You have the data--assessment data--relative to learning in a diagnostic and descriptive fashion related to what students have accomplished. It almost makes you think that it is possible to test what you teach. Seriously, curriculum alignment does just that; it provides an opportunity to match objectives, instruction, and assessment in order to facilitate learning and educational program decision-making.

Eugene Howard's and David Jackson's work is process/product combined with a responsibility indicator and timeline. There are multiple data displays from audits that lead to determinants and profiles. Although all groups started from a perception data base, the data displays are screened, verified, and validated with other backup data instruments.

The school improvement materials are based upon R&D. Initially, perception data have been verified by structured observation, curriculum alignment processes, and a multitude of substantiating mechanisms.

If you examine these three programmatic efforts in terms of overriding highlights, it is readily apparent that in terms of people, processes, and products, the programs are ongoing and continual. There is a dynamic and symbolic relationship between people, processes, and products. The programs don't stop and start. They seem to get better and better. Curriculum alignment publicizes what is taught. In other words, we teach what we say and we assess what we teach. To be honest, this alignment, supported with effective teaching, will enhance student achievement. There are no secrets in an assessment system like curriculum alignment.

As already stated, the school climate improvement program is an ongoing process. Just imagine the communications potential that exists once you have the data regarding specific school climate determinants. It does not take one with a very big imagination to realize the need for calling on Susan Everson and Roger Scott for assistance regarding the determinant data profile. Those individuals have the processes and products to help you go where you want to go.

*You have heard two or three times from each one of the presenters that is best to begin small. If you try to run down the road with everything, you are going to have some problems.*

In the development of the school improvement process at McREL, the staff traveled around to schools and reviewed research data. They selected the "best of the best" in terms of building their processes and products and preserved the integrity of the R&D base. In fact, they have enhanced the R&D base. They have provided a substantive overview of the research and have provided suggestions regarding the systematic use of the data and where you may want to initiate extra effort.

A point to remember, which all presenters have continually reinforced, is to select one or two variables to work with in the beginning. You have heard two or three times, from each one of the presenters, begin small--pick two or three things and work on them. You must have the gestalt conceptualized, but if you try to run down the road with everything and doing everything, you are going to have some problems. You must have a comprehensive plan conceptualized and in place. Then you move pieces of the plan as needed, based upon the evolving data base.

During the school climate session, Eugene Howard was asked, "What do you do with people that do not really want to do it?" Without hesitation, Eugene stated--"Ignore them!" It is important to have the belief and courage to do just what. When you have exhausted all alternatives, ignore those who do not want to help themselves help students learn. Eugene is to be commended for the honesty and integrity of that answer. Silberman, in Crisis In the Classroom, was very clear about how to work with teachers that do not and will not change. All of us would reluctantly agree that, for reasons known and unknown, students learn in spite of less-than-adequate teaching. Furthermore, you must remember--change is difficult and slow for systems as well as people.

Speaking about change, when you consider programmatic interventions of the nature we are discussing, usually one-third of any group will do whatever you want them to do, one-third of the people will wait to see what happens, and the last third would need "Divine Intervention." Seriously, when you work in the areas of school improvement, school effectiveness, and teacher effectiveness, it has been our experience that the "One-Third Rule" does not apply. Initially, we find at least two-thirds of the people involved willing to help and do what is expected. They really want to be involved in programs that help them help students.

You received some staff development research information yesterday that I want to call to your attention, because I believe it is most critical to have a thorough understanding of that information when you are considering program interventions like the ones we have been reviewing the past few days. The staff development research is the work of Bruce Joyce, Director of Booksend Institute. The information has been prepared graphically for you by McREL. Joyce's work covered a period of five years, and it highlights five important phases that a staff development intervention must go through if they are to be successful. Those stages are:

- theory,
- theory + demonstration + practice + feedback,
- theory + demonstration + practice + feedback + curriculum adaptation,
- theory + demonstration + practice + feedback + curriculum adaptation + coaching, and
- theory + demonstration + practice + feedback + curriculum adaptation + coaching + periodic review.

When staff development program interventions attend to all elements in the five phases, the potential for success is assured and the outcome is successful staff development program interventions. Interventions that are successful have in fact attended to some words that I shared with you earlier in terms of establishing the gestalt: design, develop, implement, monitor, evaluate, and reconceptualize educational program interventions. When these stages of program intervention are adhered to, the gestalt is in place in a systematic fashion, and you may expect successful program intervention because you have put in place programs that are sensitive to what Susan, Roger, Eugene, and David have shared with you, and you are attending to the phases that Joyce has specified.

Let me share with you the kind of situation that is less than acceptable. Recently I was working with personnel from a state, which will go unnamed, that is rapidly building a national reputation in school effectiveness. I asked a question, "How do you evaluate what you do and your school effectiveness thrust?" The answer was, "Well, we have not really thought about that yet." To say that I was disappointed would be an understatement. There are a lot of people talking about a lot of things and they use the contemporary rubrics--remember, as Homer Coker states, "There is a lot of snake oil out there!" If you keed in mind establishing the gestalt, attending to the faithful replication of programs we have reviewed, and Joyce's work, then success is just around the corner.

I would like to review some of the highlights regarding the program interventions we have been hearing about during the past few days. You have heard the following phraseology from all presenters: team approach, volunteers, data-based, assessment-driven programs, systematic, commitment, and gestalt. When you put this information in perspective, if you want to make a difference for students, you have to make a commitment to attending to a new agenda in staff development. The new agenda for this decade would have a continuing central focus on learning and would include the following:

- What we know about R&D efforts relative to:
  - school improvement,
  - school effectiveness,
  - teacher effectiveness,
  - school climate,
  - educational leadership,
  - curriculum alignment,
  - instructional management systems, and
  - learning focused assessment.

***Norm-referenced testing has a place, but it certainly is not sensitive to learning and instruction.***

We cannot avoid the new agenda. We must listen to those people who have done the work and who have identified those interventions that work and will not work. For example, we have to consider the place of norm-referenced testing. Parents love it because it is the "American Way of Life--Winners and Losers." I challenge you to consider that in this country--"All students should be winners; if they are not, we are the losers." I challenge you to consider criterion-referenced testing, objective-referenced testing, naturalistic inquiry, and unobtrusive measures because those are assessment systems that are sensitive to instruction and learning. Data from these assessment processes will force us to focus on what we have been hearing about. Furthermore, it will force us to make decisions about what we teach, how we teach, how we assess, how much time we need to spend, quality instructional tools, and appropriate meaningful instrumentation.

Also, we must consider what research data seem to be indicating regarding modalities and brain growth. We must soon face the reality that we are not doing all that we can to help ourselves help students. It is probable that we will never be able to do everything, but I challenge you to consider that we can do more and better in the future. We must do those things that pay off for students. We can no longer treat symptoms because they, the symptoms, go away for shorter and shorter periods of time. We must identify causes and attend to them if we desire long-term success. We must consider seriously committing ourselves to what we have heard the past few days. We must attend to school improvement in a comprehensive manner.

*We must remember and be satisfied with the fact that we are going to deal with human beings and we are going to deal with learnings.*

I believe school effectiveness, or better yet, school improvement has the potential for the same success that teacher effectiveness has had if we do what we know needs to be done--attend to those program development components and elements I have attempted to synthesize for you. My greatest concern is that school systems, districts, states, and even buildings will get involved in a haphazard fashion in school effectiveness. You can predict what you will hear. Gee! This doesn't work! That doesn't work! School effectiveness doesn't..., teacher effectiveness doesn't..., curriculum alignment doesn't..., educational leadership doesn't..., these principals don't know how to manage buses, budgets, or buildings. Please know I feel for the pressure that principals--all of us--are under in today's educational world, but I want you to think about something, "Can you remember the last time an administrator was terminated for a poor educational program?"

Many of us like to hide behind the "old saw." "We cannot afford this; it costs too much!" Let me share with you; that will not hold water anymore. Sure you need funds, but the amount of funds is minimal. What you need is commitment to rolling-up your sleeves and working hard and eventually working smart. These program interventions are ten percent cost and ninety percent hard work. Remember, you get what you pay for and what you work for in this world.

*If you really get down to the cost of some of these programs, there is not much money involved. But every speaker cautions you in a very soft sort of way—time and energy is the cost.*

Before closing, I want to commend the panel for an outstanding series of presentations. We need to commend Carolyn Hayford for the kinds of things she is doing with students who disrupt the regular school population and who we cannot help. The return rate and process rate she has exhibited is something extra special.

Dr. Mary Marockie's comments regarding the project she is directing exemplify putting the people, processes, and products together in terms of designing, developing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and reconceptualizing educational program intervention with attention to Joyce's stages. Consider the following highlights:

- team effort: includes personnel from regional education service agencies, teacher centers, principals, central office, and teachers;
- curriculum alignment: textbook and materials analysis;
- assessment: unobtrusive measures; and
- parent communication: parents actively involved.

With regard to Mary's work, I would ask you to remember what Sandy Orletsky said about the importance of parents during the opening of this forum.

Our friends from Pennsylvania have shared with us the things that are going well for them and the things that are not going so well, especially the problems with technical assistance. Even though the sheer number of school districts in Pennsylvania presents a problem in terms of being systematic, I would encourage them to get a fix on the gestalt--a master plan.

In closing, I would commend AEL and their staff for securing such outstanding presenters. The presenters deserve a standing ovation for the quality of their work during the past three days. I commend you, the audience, for your attention and the quality of questions.

I would ask you to realize that you have received a wealth of information. Please don't go back to your office and file it away; use it well. As always, AEL has given us the best of the best. Use it to improve your educational program for the benefit of students.

I ask you to remember that we, all of us, in this school improvement business--teachers, principals, supervisors, superintendents, professors, consultants, researchers, and parents--are in this together. We must be committed to improving schooling. We must care for and respect the opinions of others as we work our way through major changes. Finally, we must be committed to making a difference in schooling, teaching, and learning for our students, because we are the people who will benefit now and we are the people who will benefit tomorrow when our students lead. Remember, we know what to do, how to do it, and when to do it. We cannot do less. Thank you for your attention.

To contact the presenter, write:

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# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A:

## Agenda, Objectives, and Program Descriptions

## Day 1–June 7, 1982

| | |
|---|---|
| 11:00 a.m.- 1:30 p.m. | Registration |
| 1:30 p.m. | Greetings and Introduction *(Parlors A & B)*<br>*Ms. Sandra Orletsky, Assistant Director, Educational Services Office, Appalachia Educational Laboratory (AEL)*<br>*Dr. Jack Sanders, Director, Educational Services Office, AEL*<br>*Dr. Roy Truby, State Superintendent of Schools, Department of Education, Charleston, West Virginia* |
| 2:00 p.m. | Conference Overview and Introduction of Keynote Speaker<br>*Dr. Mabel C. Lee, Educational R & D Specialist/Conference Coordinator, Educational Services Office, AEL* |
| 2:10 p.m. | *School Effectiveness: Overview of the Research*<br>Keynote Speaker: *Dr. Susan T. Everson, Director, Regional Exchange, Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory, Kansas City, Missouri* |
| 3:15 p.m. | Break |
| 3:30 p.m. | **Session I**<br>Group A: *The School Climate Improvement Project (Parlor A)*<br>*Mr. Eugene Howard, Director, School Improvement/Leadership Unit, State Department of Education, Denver, Colorado*<br>*Mr. David Jackson, Director, Student Development Unit, Bureau of Instruction, State Department of Education, Frankfort, Kentucky*<br>Group B: *Curriculum Alignment as a Model for School Improvement (Parlor B)*<br>*Dr. Roger Scott, Director, Regional Exchange, Southwest Regional Laboratory, Los Alamitos, California* |
| 6:30 p.m. | Hospitality Hour *(Holiday Inn-Civic Center, Rooms 619 & 621)* |
| 7:30 p.m. | Dinner *(on your own)* |

## Day 2–June 8, 1982

| | |
|---|---|
| 8:00 a.m. | Coffee/Tea/Juice |
| 8:30 a.m.-11:45 a.m. | **Session II**<br>Group A: *The McREL School Improvement Project (Parlor A)–Dr. Susan T. Everson*<br>Group B: *The School Climate Improvement Project (Parlor B)–Mr. Eugene Howard and Mr. David Jackson* |

| | |
|---|---|
| 10:00 a.m. | Break |
| 12:00 p.m. | Lunch *(on your own)* |
| 1:30 p.m.- 4:45 p.m. | Session III |
| | Group A: *Curriculum Alignment as a Model for School Improvement (Parlor B)–Dr. Roger Scott* |
| | Group B: *The McREL School Improvement Project (Parlor A)–Dr. Susan T. Everson* |
| 3:00 p.m. | Break |
| 5:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. | Optional Activities *(Location to be announced)* |
| | ● Reviewing videotapes of the hearings on Minimum Competency Testing (MCT). There are three shows, one hour long, which focus on: MCT and its implications:<br>- schooling and teaching<br>- curriculum<br>- the general public and its perception of education |
| | ● Reviewing film, *Reasons for the Seasons*, developed by Dr. John Withall, Professor Emeritus at the Penn State University. The film presents a demonstration of changing teacher behaviors. |
| | ● Attending a session on *Microcomputers in Education: State-of-the-Art*. Emphasis will be placed upon instructional uses, issues, and trends. |
| | *Mr. C. Todd Strohmenger, Acting Director, Basic Skills Program, AEL* |
| | Dinner *(on your own)* |

## Day 3–June 9, 1982

| | |
|---|---|
| 8:00 a.m. | Coffee/Tea/Juice |
| 8:30 a.m. | Session IV |
| | Panel Discussion *(Parlors A & B)* |
| | *School Improvement Projects: Problems, Issues, and Answers* |
| | Panelists: *Presenters and participants from SEA's and LEA's*<br>Panel Moderator: *Dr. Mabel C. Lee* |
| 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. | *School Effectiveness: Synthesis of Conference Sessions* |
| | *Dr. Joseph C. Basile II, Director, Office of Educational Program Development, State Department of Education, Charleston, West Virginia* |
| | Dialogue/interaction with Dr. Basile, panelists, and workshop participants |
| 11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | Evaluation and Adjournment |
| | Lunch *(on your own)* |

## OBJECTIVES

1. To provide educational decision-makers in the AEL-Rx 11-state Region with information on three R & D-based projects designed to facilitate effective schooling.
2. To encourage SEA decision-makers in the AEL-Rx 11-state Region to replicate selected R & D-based school improvement projects through in-state workshops.
3. To provide members of the R & D community (presenters/researchers, and AEL staff) with information regarding the school effectiveness concerns of participants.
4. To promote contact and collaboration among presenters, researchers, workshop participants, and staff at AEL.

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

### The School Climate Improvement Project

The School Climate Improvement Project was designed in 1978 by Eugene Howard, from the Colorado Department of Education, in response to the public's concern for symptoms of student alienation as reflected in areas such as discipline, attendance, vandalism, and poor grades. In the design and development of the project, school climate has been defined as those factors called *determinants* which facilitate a positive climate. The determinants are identified to address three aspects of the school's climate: program, process, and resources. Some of the determinants are indicated below.

*Program Determinants*

- Opportunities for active learning
- Systems to accommodate individual differences with respect to expectations and rewards

*Process Determinants*

- Procedures for identifying and resolving personal, academic, and institutional problems
- Procedures for planning, both school improvement and pupil learning goals

*Resource Material Determinants*

- Adequacy of both material and personal resources and the underlying support system for making them available
- Suitability of the school plan and ground in facilitating the existing educational programs and processes

The steps in the improvement process involve students, staff, and parents in a project that extends for one year. There are eight phases of the process which begins with organization of a committee and ends with evaluation of the results. In addition to Colorado, the process has been implemented in Kentucky, Montana, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania.

### Curriculum Alignment as a Model for School Improvement

The Curriculum Alignment Project was initiated in 1979 in two Los Angeles elementary schools through the collaborative efforts of the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Southwest Regional Laboratory for Educational Research and Development (SWRL). In the design and development of the project, the overall goal was to match classroom instruction with the objectives of the curriculum and the assessment of the objectives. In the alignment of the three components, help is provided for teachers at the building level through inservice activities. The tasks included in the process are:

- Matching instructional resources and classroom activities with a continuum of essential skills,
- Organizing an instructional plan for the entire academic year,
- Developing a weekly plan for scheduling subjects that reflect a balanced curriculum,
- Directing the teaching procedures to focus on a list of essential competencies, and
- Monitoring the progress of learners and modifying instructional strategies to facilitate improvement.

Since 1979, the project has been implemented in over 70 schools as a process for upgrading teaching and learning.

### The McREL School Improvement Project

The School Improvement Project, developed by staff at the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL), was initiated in September 1980 to serve schools in their seven-state Region which includes: Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming. In providing service to the Region, McREL designed a series of workshop activities that were comprehensive in scope, but focused to accommodate the schools' unique, local needs. The workshop activities were based on research results from school improvement studies conducted at other R & D labs and centers such as the Learning Resource and Development Center (LRDC), the Far West Laboratory (FWL), the Center for the Social Organization of Schools (CSOS), as well as by individuals such as Edmonds, Glasser, and Medick.

The sequence of workshop activities begins with teachers assessing themselves, each other, and students as measures for introducing and emphasizing concepts germane to Academic Learning Time (ALT). Following the introductory activities are the workshop experiences which focus on strategies to increase ALT in three areas: Classroom management, building management, and student testing. Workshops are scheduled to extend over a period of several months so that school teams (principals, teachers, and central office staff members) may attend one-day sessions held four times during the school year. Between workshop sessions, team members are responsible for conducting special projects in their local settings.

The most salient features of the project are:

- The assessment of needs using research procedures;
- The examination of tested alternative approaches; and
- The development of action plans to address the needs.

Flexibility is pervasive as school districts utilize the workshops to address topical areas such as:

- Ability group of students;
- Whole-class instruction versus independent work;
- Motivational techniques;
- Reward systems;
- Discipline problems; and
- Testing procedures.

# APPENDIX B:

## Participant List

# School Effectiveness: Climate, Goals, and Leadership
## Workshop Participants List
## June 7-9, 1982

### Alabama

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Basic Skills Program

# APPENDIX C:

## Handouts to Presentation by Dr. Roger Scott

## Mathematics Maps of Existing Programs

**Identification of Skill Categories Tied to Maps of Existing Programs**

| Skill Area | Grade Level 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| recognition of whole numbers | x | X | X | X | | |
| order and comparison of whole numbers | x | | | | | |
| addition and subtraction facts | x | x | x | | | |
| addition and subtraction algorithms | | x | x | x | | |
| multiplication and division facts | | x | x | x | | |
| multiplication and division algorithms | | | x | x | x | x |
| recognition of simple fractions | | x | x | X | X | X |
| equivalent fractions | | | | | | |
| comparison of fractions | | | | | | |
| recognition and comparison of decimals and percents | | | | | | |
| addition and subtraction of fractions | | | | x | X | X |
| multiplication and division of fractions | | | | | | |
| computation with decimals | | | | | x | x |
| measurement topics | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| problem solving | | | x | x | x | x |
| geometry | x | x | | | | |

**Skill Areas That Account for More Than 3% of Lesson Spaco in Existing Programs.**

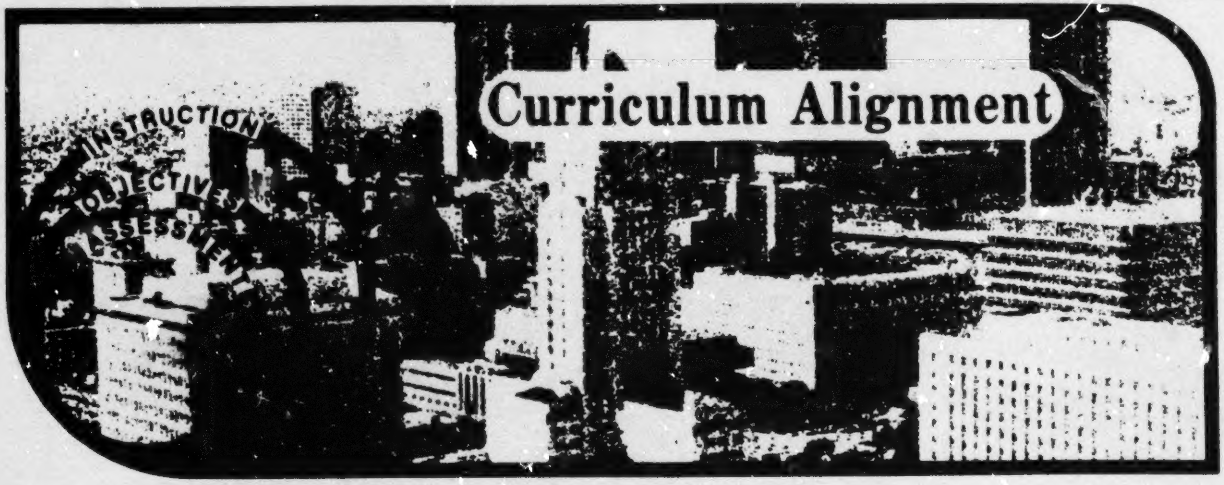
**Identification of Skill Categories Tied to Maps of Existing Programs**

# Reading Maps of Existing Programs

| Skill Area | Grade Level 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| letters | x | | | | | |
| simple consonants/vowels | x | x | | | | |
| vowel digraphs, diphthongs | x | x | x | | | |
| vowel colored by r | | x | x | | | |
| consonant digraphs and clusters | x | x | x | | | |
| variant c/g | | | x | | | |
| word recognition/meaning | x | x | x | | | |
| word meaning: definitions in context | | | x | x | x | x |
| word meaning: dictionary definitions | | | x | x | | |
| word types | | | | x | | |
| word formation | | | | x | | |
| word derivation | | | | | x | x |
| structural analysis: plurals, compounds, possessives, -ed, -ing, -es, verbs | x | x | x | | | |
| structural analysis: inflectional endings | | x | x | | | |
| structural analysis: contractions, prefixes, suffixes | | x | x | | | |
| sentence meaning | x | x | x | | | |
| comprehension: main idea, detail, sequence, title | | x | x | x | x | x |
| cause/effect, prediction/conclusion | | | x | x | x | x |
| comparison/classification | | | x | x | x | x |
| study skills: dictionary/index | | | | x | x | x |
| study skills: reference materials | | | | | x | x |
| study skills: information organizers | | | | x | | |
| literary elements | | | | | x | x |
| literary types | | | | | x | x |
| literary analysis | | | | | x | x |

**Skill Areas That Account for More Than 3% of Lesson Space in Existing Programs.**

Appendix C, No. 2



## Planning Instruction on Essential Grade-Level Skills

Curriculum Alignment activities help provide opportunities for students to learn essential skills appropriate for their grade level. By focusing instruction on essential, grade-level skills identified by the District, these activities can play an important role in improving student achievement in PHBAO schools.

Curriculum Alignment is based on the principle that instructional accomplishments can be more reliably attained when there is an alignment of: (1) instructional objectives, (2) instruction in the classroom, and (3) assessment information on instructional accomplishments. In other words, schools will be more effective when students are taught and tested on the skills we expect them to achieve.

The District has made Curriculum Alignment instructional planning possible in two ways. First, the District defined the essential skills students are expected to develop at each grade level. Second, the District has provided the Survey of Essential Skills (SES) that provides information about how well students have attained these skills.

Curriculum Alignment instructional planning involves the following steps:

- Becoming familiar with the essential skills defined by the District for each grade level.
- Identifying priority skill areas that may need additional instructional emphasis during the school year.
- Planning instruction and making notes on how priority skills will be emphasized.
- Conducting instruction and periodically checking progress to ensure that students are learning the essential skills identified for their grade level.
- Taking time at the end of the school year to identify and acknowledge the year's instructional accomplishments.

## Step 1: Becoming Familiar With Essential Grade-Level Skills

The District has established a policy that students should learn specific essential skills as they advance through school. To implement that policy, essential skills that students should learn at each grade level have been identified. For instruction to be fully effective, it is important for teachers to become thoroughly familiar with and provide necessary instruction on these essential skills.

There are many sources of information that list or describe the essential skills. Three such sources are:

- SES printouts (which include the skills assessed at each grade level)
- Abbreviated lists of grade-level skills and sample assessment items
- The *Elementary School Curriculum: A Balanced Program*

## Step 2: Identifying Skill Areas That May Need Additional Instructional Emphasis

This Curriculum Alignment activity involves examining the essential grade-level skills to identify those skills that should receive special attention during the school year. In setting priorities, there are several important sources of information, including a teacher's experience and judgment, school and District priorities, and the results of last year's SES administration. The SES results can be used in at least two ways. First, information about last year's students may indicate which grade-level skills were successfully taught and which skills may require more emphasis. Second, information about incoming students may indicate major areas of weakness that should be addressed.

Some questions to consider in establishing instructional priorities include:

- In what skill areas are incoming students weak?
- Which of these skill areas are important prerequisites to learning other grade-level skills?
- What skill areas are inadequately covered in instructional resources?
- What skill areas will require a substantial amount of classroom attention if instruction is to be successful?

## Step 3: Planning Instruction and Noting How Priority Skill Areas Will Be Emphasized

This activity is designed to help plan instruction so that all students receive adequate instruction in essential grade-level skills. During the school year, most students receive instruction in most grade-level skills simply because they are participating in the grade-level instructional program. But, it is important to plan instruction to help ensure that every student receives adequate instruction in all grade-level skills.

Some planning considerations include:

- **Strategies.** Are new or improved teaching strategies needed to effectively teach certain skills? Can grade-level skills be taught or reinforced during instruction in other subjects?
- **Instructional Materials.** Is textbook coverage of grade-level skills adequate? Will supplementary materials be necessary to adequately address certain skill areas?
- **Time.** How much time will be needed to effectively teach grade-level skills to all students? What interferes with the time devoted to teaching grade-level skills?

During planning, each priority skill area should be given special consideration. Notes should be made regarding the instructional strategies, materials, and time that will be devoted to each skill area that will be given special emphasis.

## Step 4: Checking Student Progress in Learning the Essential Grade-Level Skills

It is important to continuously monitor progress in teaching grade-level skills throughout the school year. This activity encourages taking the time, around mid-year, to more formally review progress in carrying out plans for teaching grade-level skills. As part of checking progress, student progress is reviewed. Checking progress involves determining whether all students have received instruction in the skills taught thus far, whether students have successfully learned those skills, and if priority skills have received the special emphasis that was planned.

When checking progress, needed modifications in the instructional plan can be defined. Around mid-year is also a good time to determine if the instructional strategies, materials, and time that have been specified for teaching the remaining skills are adequate.

## Step 5: Acknowledging Accomplishments and Planning Next Steps

The end of the school year is an appropriate time for reviewing success in meeting instructional objectives and the students' success in learning grade-level skills. The following questions can be considered:

- Did all students receive instruction in all grade-level skills? Did students successfully attain grade-level skills?
- Were our objectives (the essential grade-level skills) clearly defined for students and parents?
- How successful were we in addressing priority skill areas?
- Should our instructional planning be changed during the next school year?
- What actions should be taken between now and when school starts to improve teaching of the essential, grade-level skills?

The Curriculum Alignment instructional planning process was designed to help teachers analyze the problems encountered in teaching grade-level skills, and to develop a plan of action for minimizing or eliminating those problems.

## School- and Grade-Level Planning Meetings

Curriculum Alignment is a tool that can help the entire faculty work together to improve the instructional program. Many of the activities that have been described can be completed in schoolwide faculty meetings or in grade-level meetings. It is often particularly helpful for teachers to work through the activities in grade-level groups. Grade-level groups can frequently identify common priorities, plan instruction cooperatively, and share strategies and resources for effectively teaching grade-level skills. In addition to these benefits, Curriculum Alignment activities can help to increase communication and commitment to effective instruction in the essential grade-level skills.

## Resources Available for Facilitating Curriculum Alignment Instructional Planning

There are a variety of resources available to help teachers and administrators implement Curriculum Alignment instructional planning at their school.

The *Curriculum Alignment Guide* provides information about Curriculum Alignment and numerous suggestions for conducting school-level instructional planning activities. The Guide includes presentation outlines for conducting school- and grade-level instructional planning sessions. It also includes information related to each step in the instructional planning process, overhead transparencies, and follow-up suggestions.

*Curriculum Alignment Instructional Planning Sheets* provide one possible format for teachers to use in making notes about their instructional planning. There are separate planning sheets for each grade level (K-6) and each subject area (reading, composition, and mathematics). They provide a list of the essential skills for the grade level, a space to designate priority skills, and a space for instructional planning notes.

The District also provides *SES Reports* each year, along with guidelines for using SES results. In addition, the District publishes the *Elementary School Curriculum: A Balanced Program* (the comprehensive listing of all grade-level skills), specimen sets (sample assessment items for the essential skills assessed at each grade level), and a variety of other instructional planning resources.

Curriculum Alignment is a collaborative project of the Los Angeles Unified School District and SWRL Educational Research and Development.

1982 Los Angeles Unified School District

## APPENDIX D:

### Handouts to Presentations by Mr. Eugene Howard and Mr. David Jackson

### IDENTITY CARD

Role: Administrator

You may choose to be a principal or an assistant principal.

As an administrator you are interested in encouraging the development of a positive climate so that achievement can be improved and so that staff and student morale can be enhanced

You believe in involving people in decision-making and planning, but you are impatient. At times push people a little too hard and they resist your pressure.

You listen well and genuinely respect other peoples' opinions.

### IDENTITY CARD

Role: Parent

You are a member of the school advisory committee and an active supporter of the PTA. You have three children in school. Your major interest is that your children receive a "good" education which will prepare them for college. You are generally supportive of school improvement activities. You know a lot about the school and its programs.

### IDENTITY CARD

Role: Student Leader

You are a member of the student council and very active in athletics and several other activities. You are interested in involving groups of students in school improvement activities.

### IDENTITY CARD

Role: Teacher

Please report to the group the subject which you choose to teach or (if elementary) the grade level; or, you may wish to be a counselor or librarian. (Your role should be different from that of the other teacher in your group).

You consider yourself a traditional, not an innovative teacher. You believe in well-structured. subject-centered instruction based on high standards. You are willing to make some accommodations for individual differences, but most of your teaching is directed to the total class.

You like your students and they like and respect you. They see you as a "no-nonsense" teacher.

### IDENTITY CARD

Role: Teacher

Please report to the group the subject which you choose to teach or (if elementary) the grade level; or you may wish to be a counselor or librarian. (Your role should be different from that of the other teacher in your group)

As a teacher you are aware of a large number of innovative practices which, you believe, show promise for improving pupils' satisfaction and achievement. You would like to have support for trying some of these new ideas in your classroom.

You are a highly professional, dedicated person who really likes children and adolescents.

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## AEL REGIONAL WORKSHOP SCHOOL CLIMATE

### Instructions to Small Groups

Determinant to be considered:

1. As soon as you receive this instruction sheet ask one individual in your group to request that each participant introduce himself or herself to the group. All participants should be asked to give their names and to describe briefly (30 seconds) what interest they have in school climate.

2. Once the introductions are completed, the group selects a group leader and a recorder.

3. The group leader now asks each participant to assume an identity for the simulation. This is done by distributing randomly the identity cards provided in the package.

4. The group leader then reads the following statement to the group:

   "This small group session has been designed as a simulation so that participants can experience one important portion of the school climate improvement process. The simulation will replicate that portion of the climate improvement workshop which involves a large number of people in using the data from the ASCD instrument as a basis for planning climate improvement activities.

   This group has been given the data regarding the faculty's reaction to a number of activities, programs, and projects related to one climate determinant, ____________________________. Here is a sheet summarizing this data."

5. Review the Item Analysis Information (10 minutes)

   At this point the group leader distributes the item analysis report form related to the determinant to be discussed. As soon as each participant has received the report, the leader informs the group that he or she will ask several questions about the report which will help participants understand its significance.

   (1) Note those items which have been identified by the faculty as strengths. (These items can be identified by the "S's" which have been written onto the report sheet.)

   What are some of the ways that these activities are contributing to a positive climate?

   (2) Note those items which have been identified by the faculty as concerns. (These items can be identified by the "C's" which have been written onto the report sheet.)

   Why has very little been done in this school to implement this idea?

(3) Discuss any other items which the group finds of interest. Be sure that the participants understand the meaning of all of the items.

6. Brainstorming (25 minutes) (see enclosed page)

Next, read the Rules for Brainstorming to your group. Then ask your group members to think of as many ideas as they can for strengthening the climate determinant you have been assigned to consider. Your group may wish to consider strengthening some activities, programs, and projects already under way in your school as well as implementing new activities. Encourage participants to suggest ideas from their own experience as well as ideas which have been reported on the report form.

NOTE: Ideas should be of the type which a task force of parents, staff, and/or students could implement. (Try to avoid making recommendations to the central office or the board.)

Ask your group recorder to list all ideas offered on the large sheet of paper which has been furnished. Your group will have 20 minutes to list as many ideas as possible.

7. Prioritizing (10 minutes)

Next, ask your group to seriously consider recommending from 3 to 6 of the most promising ideas which have been listed. Ideas recommended should be those which the group feels have the greatest potential for influencing the climate of your school in a positive manner. Recommended ideas should also be implementable in your school.

When agreement has been reached by your group regarding an item, ask your recorder to place a large star or other symbol in front of that item on the list.

8. Reporting (2 minutes)

Your workshop leader will ask for a report so that all workshop participants will be aware of your group's recommendations. Please report only on your group's TOP priority recommendations.

Please limit the length of your report to two minutes.

ERH/es

Appendix D, No. 3

## PROCESS DETERMINANTS

### G. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

| What Is<br>(the extent to which the activity takes place in your school) | What Should Be<br>(the extent to which the activity would influence the climate of the school positively) |
|---|---|
| 1 - does not take place in this school | 1 - would influence the school's climate negatively or not at all |
| 2 - is in a beginning state of development. It operates on a very limited basis | 2 - would have a very limited positive effect on the school's climate |
| 3 - is operating well but on a limited basis | 3 - would have a positive effect on the school's climate |
| 4 - is operating well on a school-wide basis affecting most pupils in the school | 4 - would have a very positive effect on the school's climate |

___ 1. Communications between the school and parents are facilitated through the use of newsletters and letters from the school and from various programs within the school. 1. ___________

___ 2. Parents have opportunities to communicate with teachers informally by attending a variety of school-sponsored activities such as parent orientation programs, school performances, sports, back to school nights, dramatic and art activities, or art fairs. 2. ___________

___ 3. Communications between parents and the school administration and faculty is facilitated through a parent volunteer program. 3. ___________

___ 4. Parents learn about their children's achievements in school through a "positive calls home" or a positive letters home" program. 4. ___________

___ 5. Parents, faculty members, and individual pupils meet periodically to discuss the pupil's progress through a parent-pupil conferencing program. 5. ___________

___ 6. Parents attend parenting classes or parent effectiveness training programs as a means of communicating with the school about problems they are having with their children. 6. ___________

___ 7. A PTA or similar organization functions to keep communications open between the home and the school. 7. ___________

___ 8. Parents and other community members communicate with the school by participating in community-sponsored events which use school facilities. 8. ___________

___ 9. The principal periodically invites parents to meet with him or her to discuss school programs, plans, and problems (e.g. a "coffee klatch" day). 9. ___________

___ 10. Administrators and faculty members facilitate informal communication between school and community by participating in community organizations and attending community-sponsored events. 10. ___________

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__ 11. The school organizes retreats designed to open communications among staff members, among students, or between staff and students. 11. __________

__ 12. Faculty meetings are planned to provide opportunities for ni-communication-opening activities among faculty members and between the faculty and administration. 12. __________

__ 13. The social structure (clique structure) of the school is studied and activities are planned to open communications among various cliques which are isolated from one another. 13. __________

__ 14. 14. __________

__ 15. 15. __________

☐ Total ☐

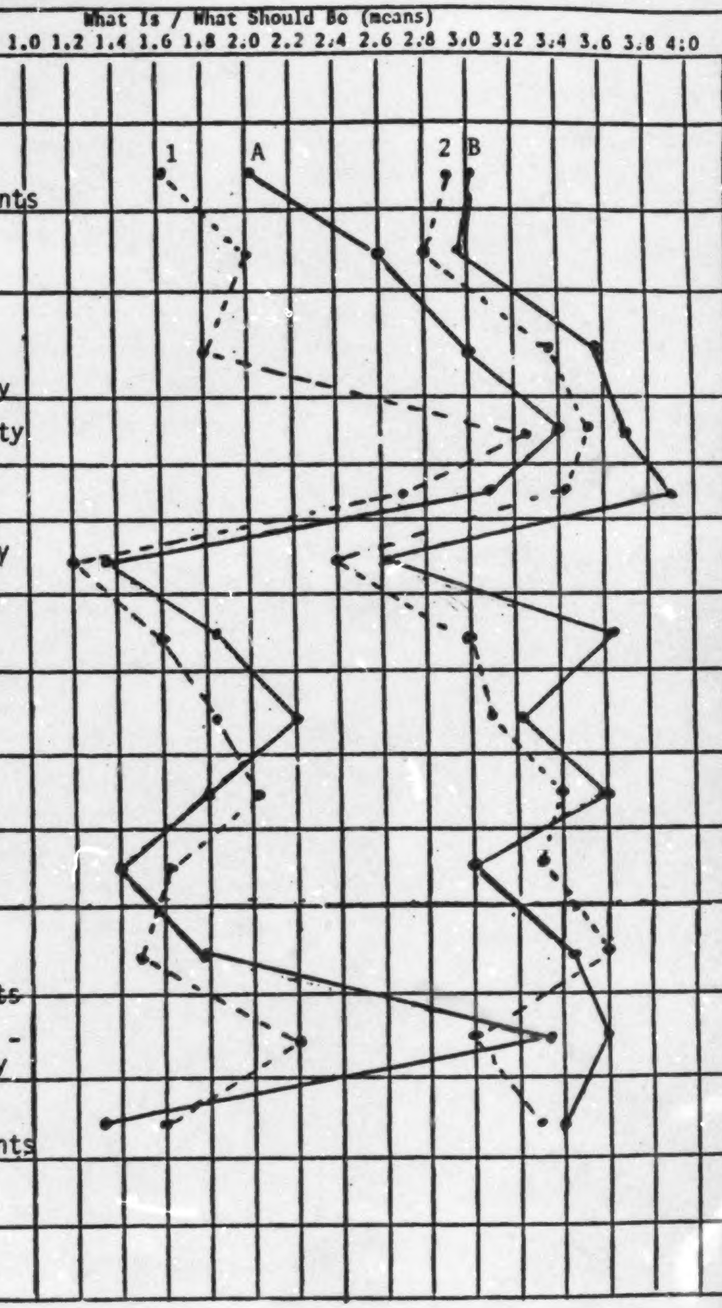
Appendix D, No. 4

**PROCESS DETERMINANTS**

**ITEM ANALYSIS REPORT FORM**
**Mini-Audit #2**

School ____________
Date ____________

**Determinants and Item**



**C. Effective Communications**

1. Communications between school and parents facilitated from various programs within the school concern-students
2. Teacher/parent communication through informal school sponsored activities
3. Communications between parents, school administration and faculty facilitated through parent volunteer program strength-faculty
4. Children's achievements learned about through various programs strength-faculty + students
5. Periodic meetings to discuss pupil's progress strength-faculty
6. Parenting classes training programs as a means of communicating problems with their children concern-faculty + students
7. PTA keeps communications open between home and school concern - faculty + students
8. Community members communicate with school by participating in community-sponsored events concern-students
9. Principal periodically invites parents to meet informally with him concern-faculty + students
10. Administrators & faculty members participate in community-sponsored events. concern - faculty + students
11. School organized retreats designed to open communications among staff, student. concern-faculty + students
12. Faculty meetings planned to provide communication-opening activities among faculty and administrators strength - faculty
13. Social structure of school studied to open communications among various cliques. concern-faculty + students
14.
15.

NOTE: (1) Lots of student and faculty support for items 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11 & 13

(2) Low student and faculty support for item 6.

Which strengths should be strengthened?
Which weaknesses should be strengthened?

CODE -
Students: 1 What is – – – – – –
2 What should be – - – -
Faculty: A What is ————
B What should be ———

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# DEFINITIONS OF CLIMATE TERMS
(as used in climate assessment)

## EVIDENCES OF A POSITIVE CLIMATE

Evidences of caring, respect, trust, cohesiveness, high morale, and continuous social and academic growth are sought. Characteristics of the school as well as of the people in the school are noted.

This section, to a large extent, deals with the "symptoms" of a positive climate.

## PROGRAM DETERMINANTS

### 1. OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVE LEARNING:

Evidences of students learning by inter-acting with "pieces of reality" are sought. In active learning, pupils become totally involved in the learning process. "Active Learning" is the opposite of "passive".

### 2. INDIVIDUALIZED PERFORMANCE EXPECTATION AND VARIED REWARD SYSTEMS:

Practices are identified whereby staff members recognize individual differences among pupils. Everyone is not expected to learn the same things in the same way or in the same length of time. Rewards are sufficiently available so that all pupils, with effort, may expect to be positively and frequently recognized by the school.

### 3. VARIED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS/FLEXIBLE CURRICULUM AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

A wide variety of settings is provided by the school so that appropriate settings are available for many activities. Some such settings may be in places other than the school. The curriculum is different for each learner. Each learner's individual interests, maturity, ability and learning style is recognized. Extra-curricular activities are sufficiently varied so that the interests of all pupils may be accommodated.

### 4. SUPPORT AND STRUCTURE APPROPRIATE TO LEARNER'S MATURITY:

Pupils who need special assistance in being productive are provided with that assistance. Pupils who can assume responsibility for helping others are provided opportunities for doing so. Pupils needing very little structure are provided with more autonomy than pupils who are more dependent on others.

### 5.. RULES COOPERATIVELY DETERMINED:

The rules of the school, the individual classrooms, and the school's major activities have been cooperatively developed, are generally understood, and are revised as needed.

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## PROCESS DETERMINANTS

### 6. PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY/IDENTIFYING AND WORKING WITH CONFLICTS/INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING:

Established processes for identifying and resolving personal problems and inter-personal conflicts are identified. Likewise, information regarding how institutional problems are identified and resolved is sought. How the school involves people in personal, academic, and institutional decision-making is examined.

### 7. IMPROVEMENT OF SCHOOL GOALS - PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE:

Goals are of two types: school improvement goals and pupil learning goals. Planning processes include planning for school improvement as well as planning for personal growth.

### 8. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS:

Formal processes which have been established to facilitate communications are identified.

### 9. AUTONOMY WITH ACCOUNTABILITY:

Information is sought regarding the extent to which the people in the school have been given responsibility for their own and the school's improvement. Processes for delegating authority and holding individuals and groups responsible (accountable) for results are identified.

### 10. EFFECTIVE TEACHING-LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Strategies which are consistent with what is known (and what is strongly suspected) about promoting learning and motivation are identified. Some of the strategies will be isolated - i.e., characteristics of only a few teachers. Others will be general - school-wide.

## MATERIAL DETERMINANTS

### 11. ADEQUATE RESOURCES AND SUPPORTIVE LOGISTICAL SYSTEMS:

Both material and personal resources are considered. Resources within the community which are used by pupils and staff are also noted. The term "logistics", refers to the process whereby needed resources are readily made available - e.g., if you order something will you receive it promptly with a minimum of red tape and hassle.

### 12. SUITABILITY OF SCHOOL PLANT AND GROUNDS:

Determinant #11 deals with adequacy; this determinant deals with suitability - i.e., the extent to which the buildings and grounds facilitate the type of educational programs and processes which are being implemented.

# RULES FOR BRAINSTORMING

1. Anyone can contribute, but only one person talks at a time.

2. Give the group leader time enough to write down one idea before you offer another.

3. It is strictly against the rules to criticize or otherwise discuss an idea. Discussion comes later after all the ideas are out.

4. Remember that what is desired is quantity of ideas, not quality. Offer your idea even if you don't think it is a very good one. Your "wild" idea may trigger a not-so-wild ideas from someone else. Any idea is of value.

5. Hitch-hike or combine ideas. Not only should you come up with ideas -- you should also be alert to adding to or improving on another person's idea.

Appendix D, No. 7

# A DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT TASK FORCE

Eugene R. Howard

## I. Rationale & Assumptions

A. That if large numbers of people are involved in the school improvement process, the effect on morale, commitment, and cohesiveness will be positive.

B. That the principal and a small number of leaders cannot, by themselves, do all of the work necessary to make significant improvements in schools; therefore, assistance is needed.

C. That teachers, parents, and student leaders, if given an opportunity to work for school improvement, will welcome the opportunity to do so.

D. That the willingness of staff, pupils, and parents to assume responsibility for school improvement activities will increase as positive results are demonstrated by the original task forces -- that the idea that anyone can contribute to making the school a better place is contagious.

E. That task forces organized to affect positively the determinants of climate (active learning, support and structure, communications, decision-making, etc.) are more likely to have a significant and lasting impact on a school's climate than are task forces focused on symptoms or problems. (Although the task force structure can be used for improving symptoms and solving problems.)

F. That making a significant impact on a school's climate by affecting its determinants is a long-term, not a short-term process.

## II. Definition

A. A task force is a group of individuals who work together in a common effort to achieve agreed-upon objectives. It is a planning, working, and learning group, not a studying and recommending group. Unlike a committee, a task force does not think up things for other people to do. Rather, the task force is an action group. It has accepted an assignment to assume the responsibility for planning and implementing a set of school improvement activities.

B. Task forces have been delegated the authority to complete those activities which are specified in the SCIC's charge statement (see sample in Appendix A) and in the task force's action plan (see sample in Appendix B).

C. The task force idea was developed by business and industry as a means of assembling the best available talent in an organization and focusing that talent on unusually complex projects. As in business and industry, task force membership is drawn from any or all organizational units.

D. Short-term task forces may address specific problems, solve those problems, and then disband, thereby making a limited impact on school climate.

January, 1982

E. Task forces focusing on climate determinants, because of the complex, technical nature of their tasks, usually are long-term, remaining operational for from 2-4 years. The membership and objectives of such task forces tend to change from year to year. The overall focus, however, remains constant.

## III. Organization

A. The task force leader, usually chosen by the task force membership is assigned the following responsibilities:

1. To facilitate the task force's planning so that specific action plans related to the task force's improvement objectives are developed.

2. To serve as the task force's representative on the school climate improvement committee (SCIC).

3. To present the original action plan to the SCIC for approval and to present changes to the plan to SCIC as they are proposed by task force members.

4. To provide periodic progress reports to the SCIC, to the faculty, and to other groups regarding the task force's accomplishments.

5. To expedite the implementation of the task force's action plan by encouraging each task force member to complete his or her assigned duties in an efficient manner. Also, to monitor the action plan's time line so that planned activities occur on schedule.

6. To encourage the professional growth of task force members by recommending appropriate reading, discussing school improvement ideas with the group, and by arranging for visits to projects in other schools with similar objectives.

7. To encourage the expansion of the task force's action plan as task force members grow in their ability to distinguish between less significant and more significant improvement.

8. Task force leaders are responsible to the SCIC for the effectiveness of their work.

B. Each task force member has the responsibility for at least one activity listed in the action plan. (No free rides; everyone works) Some task force members also have responsibility for the achievement of objectives (one planning sheet). (See Appendix B.)

C. The task force will have an established meeting time and place. Members will agree initially to schedule other responsibilities around the task force meeting time so that task force meetings will be well attended. A member who must be absent will contact the leader before the meeting to provide the leader with the necessary progress report. The absent member also contacts the leader after the meeting for a briefing regarding what happened.

D. The task force's organizational relationship with the SCIC is shown in the diagram in Appendix C.

E. Initially, the task force is small--4-6 members. Later, as the task force assumes new duties, the membership is expanded.

F. As a task force grows in size and complexity, sub-groups related to specific objectives may be formed.

G. Initially, the task force is staffed by volunteers. No one should be arbitrarily assigned to a group.

H. Once the original group has been formed, additional members may be invited to join the group. Members are chosen on the basis of their ability to contribute to the group's objectives, regardless of whether those persons are teachers, non-teaching staff members, pupils, or parents.

I. Some task forces may be sponsored by the parents' association or by the student council. Most task forces, however, will probably be sponsored by the faculty.

J. Whenever possible task forces are provided with a small budget to cover the costs of travel of their members to other schools to view promising projects and to cover the cost of establishing a modest professional library related to the task force's objectives.

## IV. Evaluation

A. Each task force is responsible for conducting three kinds of evaluations:

1. Evaluation of the impact of the task force's work in relation to the task forces objectives,
2. Evaluation of the processes whereby the task force makes its decisions, solves its problems, develops its plans, and manages its work, and
3. Evaluation designed to improve the effectiveness of each of the task force's projects at each stage of its development (formative evaluation).

B. Impact evaluation is formal and usually statistical.

C. Process evaluation and formative evaluation may be informal and non-statistical. Process and formative information is developed primarily for the task force's own use. Such information is helpful to the task force as it makes decisions regarding its own effectiveness.

D. Most task forces will require outside consultant assistance in designing their evaluation procedures. Such assistance is available in some schools or school districts and from most universities. (If consultant assistance is not available, the evaluation expectations of the task force should be minimal.)

# SUMMARY OF THE SCHOOL CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

## Eight Steps
by
Eugene R. Howard

This school climate improvement process has been developed by the State of Colorado's League of Schools for Climate Improvement. As of June 1, 1981, seventy schools had completed their assessments and had successfully formed climate improvement task forces.

Eight Steps

The eight steps in the process, shown in Figure 1, are:

1. Form the School Climate Improvement Committee (SCIC). This committee manages the climate improvement process, provides leadership and support to the task forces, obtains and maintains faculty, student, and parent support for the project, and assesses and reports on the project's outcomes. Parents, students, and staff interested in climate improvement serve on this committee.

2. Collect Base-Line Data. One of the first tasks of the SCIC is to collect base-line data so that the impact of the climate improvement project can be measured over time. Two general questions are answered with the base-line data: (1) To what extent does this school now have a positive or negative climate? and (2) To what extent are the symptoms of a negative climate apparent in the school?

Data relating to question #1 may be obtained from assessments of pupil and staff morale, and from climate assessment instruments such as the CFK Ltd Profile.

Information related to climate symptoms is already available in most schools. The SCIC has the task of gathering this information, insuring its accuracy, and summarizing it. Information on the following topics is commonly available:

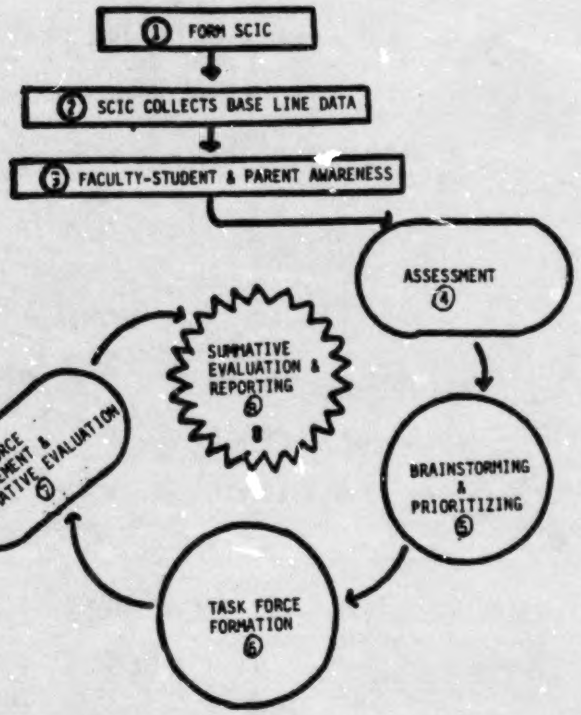
- discipline problems (referrals --- number and degree of severity of offense)
- staff and student absenteeism
- percentage of low and failing grades (and high and excellent grades)
- vandalism costs (while school is in session)
- drop-out rate (secondary)
- library useage
- attendance at school-sponsored activities
- faculty turn-over
- suspensions
- drug and alcohol abuse statistics

Revised 7/21/81

Figure 1

SCHOOL CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

EIGHT STEPS


① FORM SCIC
② SCIC COLLECTS BASE LINE DATA
③ FACULTY-STUDENT & PARENT AWARENESS
ASSESSMENT ④
BRAINSTORMING & PRIORITIZING ⑤
TASK FORCE FORMATION ⑥
TASK FORCE MANAGEMENT & FORMATIVE EVALUATION ⑦
SUMMATIVE EVALUATION & REPORTING ⑧

3. Raising the Level of Faculty, Student and Parent Awareness. Through a series of awareness-raising workshops and through a variety of other activities, faculty members, students, and parents learn about school climate and become convinced that climate improvement activities would benefit their school. Two very valuable activities: (1) visiting other schools which have successful programs and (2) participation in a mini-audit (Step 4) of another school.

4. Assessing the School's Climate. SCIC sponsors a mini-audit of the school's climate. The mini-audit may be done with a written instrument or with a visiting team. The mini-audit will identify those climate determinants which are being most positively and least positively affected by the school's activities, programs and projects. Parents, students, and the total school staff are actively involved in this process. Mini-audit results are analyzed, interpreted, and communicated to faculty, students, and parents.

5. Brainstorming and Prioritizing. At a workshop organized for this purpose, staff members and parent and student leaders use mini-audit information on which to base judgments regarding promising practices for improving the school's climate. From one to five determinants are chosen for future emphasis.

6. Task Force Formation. SCIC then forms from one to five task forces. Each task force is given a charge from SCIC to initiate activities, projects, and programs to influence positively one of the determinants of climate. Task forces may be sponsored by the faculty, by a parent organization, or by the student council.

7. Task Force Management. SCIC and the principal facilitate and support the work of the task forces. Task force leaders report progress periodically to the principal, to SCIC, to the total faculty, and to parent and student groups as appropriate.

8. Summative Evaluation. SCIC collects, interprets, and reports data regarding the extent to which the school's climate has been improved and the extent to which there have been changes in the climate symptoms. The instruments and procedures used are the same as those used to collect base-line data (Step 2).

### An Organizational Structure

Figure 2 shows an organizational structure for managing school climate improvement.

A unique feature of this organizational plan is the dual membership of each task force leader. Each leader is a member of his or her task force and also a member of SCIC.

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information regarding how this process works, contact:

Eugene R. Howard, Director
School Improvement & Leadership Services Unit
Colorado Department of Education
201 E. Colfax
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 866-5356

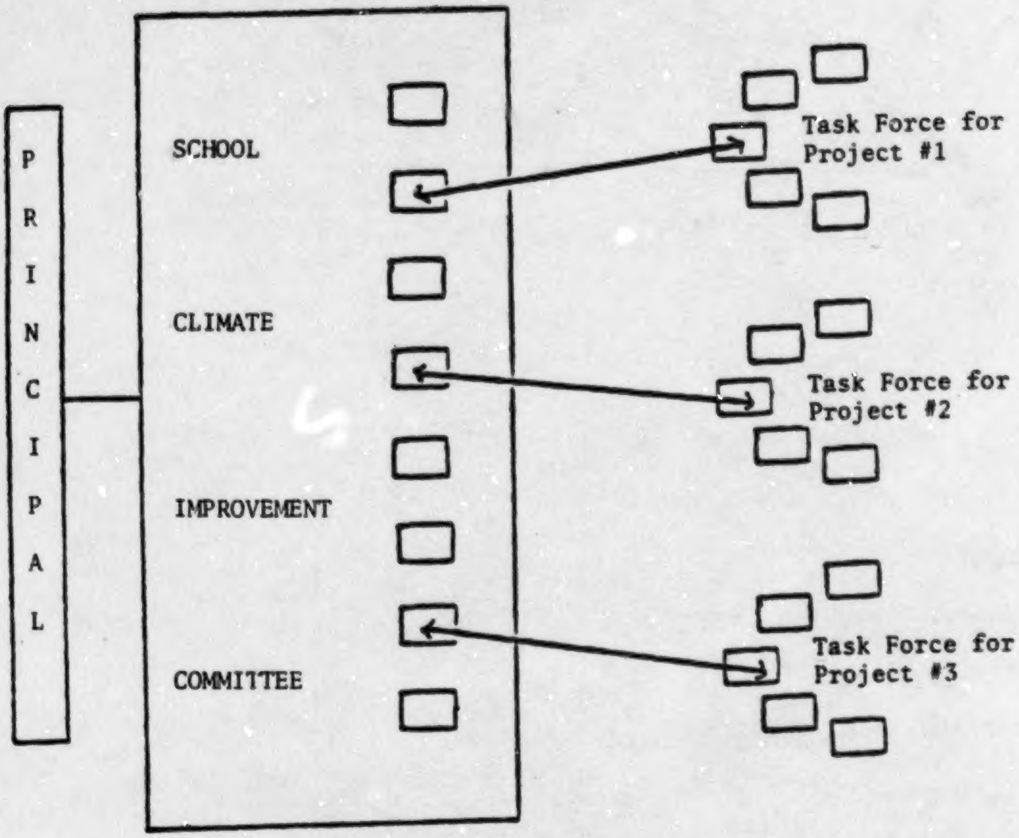
# APPENDIX A

## SAMPLE CHARGE STATEMENT TO A NEW TASK FORCE

The ________________ Task Force is charged with accomplishing the following:

1. To study the recommendations for school improvement which have been made by various sub-groups in the climate assessment workshop and to develop objectives and activities consistent with those recommendations.
2. To study and discuss other promising approaches for influencing positively the determinant to be impacted and to develop objectives and activities related to those approaches. (significance)
3. To agree on an over-all improvement plan related to the determinant to be impacted.
4. To seek approval of the improvement plan by the SCIC.
5. Following approval of the plan, to implement it with due consideration for specific task assignments and target dates.
6. To foster professional growth and development among all task force participants so that the group's impact on climate will be progressively enhanced.
7. To report the progress of the task force to the SCIC, the faculty, parents, students, the superintendent's office, and the Board of Education.
8. To recruit new talent into the task force as such talent is needed to achieve newly-defined objectives.
9. To replace non-functioning members as necessary.
10. To evaluate the impact of the task force's work in relation to the task force's objectives, and to report this impact information to the SCIC and other interested groups and individuals.
11. To evaluate the effectiveness of the processes whereby the task force makes its decisions, solves its problems, develops its plans, and manages its work. To improve the effectiveness of the task force by modifying its procedures in accordance with such evaluations.
12. To periodically evaluate the effectiveness of each of the task force's school improvement projects so that the effectiveness of each project can be improved at each stage of its development (formative evaluation).

## ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN FOR
## SCHOOL CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT


PRINCIPAL
SCHOOL
CLIMATE
IMPROVEMENT
COMMITTEE
Task Force for Project #1
Task Force for Project #2
Task Force for Project #3

Each task force plans, administers, and evaluates one climate improvement project.

# APPENDIX B

## SAMPLE PLAN OF WORK - TASK FORCE

## TASK FORCE ON TEACHER ADVISEMENT

OBJECTIVE: IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN TEACHERS AND PUPILS AND PROVIDE EACH PUPIL WITH FACULTY SUPPORT IN PERSONAL PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING.

RESPONSIBILITY: JIM HANSON ASSISTED BY: MARIE DAVIS, JO ANN BROWN
BILL BUCKNER, HAROLD JENSEN

| ACTIVITIES | TARGET DATE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|---|---|---|
| 1. PROVIDE TASK FORCE MEMBERS WITH INFORMATION REGARDING SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS. | ON-GOING | JIM |
| 2. ORGANIZE VISITATIONS TO OTHER SCHOOLS | SEPT. 20<br>OCT. 15<br>NOV. 15 | BILL |
| 3. DESIGN PILOT PROJECT FOR JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL | DEC. 1 | HAROLD AND TOTAL TASK FORCE |
| 4. DESIGN EVALUATION PLAN FOR PILOT PROJECT | DEC. 1 | JO ANN |
| 5. PLAN AND CONDUCT IN-SERVICE FOR PILOT PROJECT ADVISORS | OCT. 15<br>NOV. 15<br>DEC. 5 AND ON-GOING | MARIE |
| 6. KEEP FACULTY, PARENTS, AND STUDENTS INFORMED OF PROJECTS | ON-GOING | JIM AND MARIE |

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# SCHOOL CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT RATIONALE

Appendix D, No. 11

Several recent research studies indicate that an improved climate contributes to (1) the reduction of symptoms of alienation and (2) improved achievement.

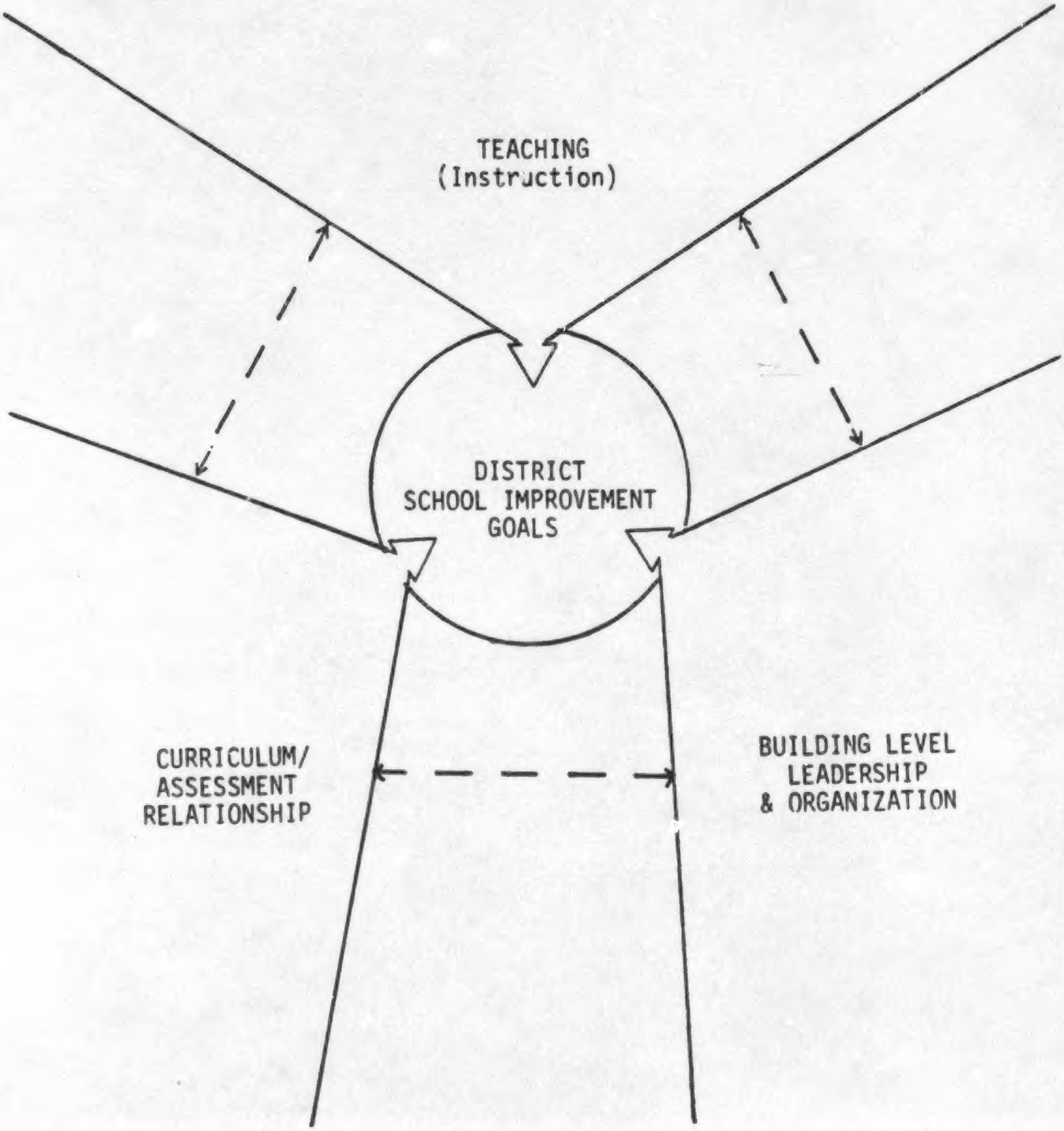
| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Michael Rutter<br>University of London<br>Fifteen Thousand Hours | 1. Studied 12 urban secondary schools. The "ethos" or "climate" has a significant effect on student behavior, including troublesome behavior and achievement. |
| 2. Wilbur Brookover<br>Michigan State<br>School Social Systems and Student Achievement | 2. Studied 91 randomly-selected elementary schools in Michigan. "School learning climate" explained differences in achievement as well as did racial composition of the school or socio-economic level of pupils. |
| 3. Safe Schools Task Force<br>State of Washington<br>(1980) | 3. Spent two years studying causes of vandalism, theft, crimes against persons, etc. conclusion: "An invigorating school climate -- one that provides high levels of student and staff satisfaction and commitment ... is the most important element in reducing school crime." |
| 4. Connecticut Safe Schools Study (1980) | 4. The council recommended climate improvement in schools as a priority for the state. Climate described as "The key to avoiding much of the violence and destruction that occurs in our schools." |
| 5. Dr. Ronald Edmonds<br>Harvard (1980) | 5. Analyzed and summarized several studies designed to identify characteristics of effective urban schools. Identified four characteristics common to all studies:<br>1. Strong administrative leadership.<br>2. "Climate of expectation"<br>3. The school's "atmosphere" (climate) -- "orderly with being rigid: quiet without being oppressive: generally conducive to the instructional business at hand," and<br>4. Frequent monitoring of pupil progress. |
| 6. Lawrence Lezotte, Et Al<br>Michigan State University<br>School Learning Climate and Student Achievement | 6. Analyzes a large number of studies which "largely demonstrate that schools, and school learning climates in particular, have a significant impact on achievement."<br>Defines learning climate as "The Norms, beliefs, and attitudes reflected in institutional patterns and behavioral practices that enhance or impede student achievement." |

# APPENDIX E:

## Handouts to Presentation by Dr. Susan T. Everson

# SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

## WORKSHOP FRAMEWORK


TEACHING
(Instruction)
DISTRICT
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
GOALS
CURRICULUM/
ASSESSMENT
RELATIONSHIP
BUILDING LEVEL
LEADERSHIP
& ORGANIZATION

# EFFECTIVE SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

15,000 Hours, Rutter et al

1. Physical and administrative features of schools made very little difference.
2. The academic emphasis of the schools made a difference.
3. Teacher actions in lessons made a difference.
4. Rewards, rather than punishment, made a difference.
5. Pupil conditions made a difference.
6. Student responsibility and participation made a difference.
7. School organization factors made a difference.

Effective Schools Study, Edmonds et al

1. Building Leadership.
2. Common Goals.
3. School Climate.
4. Implied Teacher Expectations.
5. Monitoring System.

Appendix E, No. 3

## WORKSHEET FOR ACADEMIC EFFICIENCY

I. TOTAL TIME AVAILABLE IN SCHOOL DAY (min.): ____________

II. TIME LOST TO BUILDING-CONTROLLED FACTORS: A+B+C+D+E+F =

A. Time lost to lunch period (min.) ____________

B. Time lost to announcements/homeroom (min.) ____________

C. Time lost between classes (min.) ____________

D. Time lost to free period (min.) ____________

E. Time lost to recess (min.) ____________

F. Other time lost out of class (min.) ____________

III. TIME AVAILABLE TO TEACHERS FOR INSTRUCTION

I - II = ____________

Appendix E, No. 4

## SUMMARY OF IDEAS

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP KIDS ACHIEVE

### TIME

Spend more time introducing, discussing and reviewing seatwork and less in the final seatwork.

Plan and carry out specific steps to end one lesson and begin another in order to increase learning time and decrease transition time.

Spend more time with students on reading and math, and less on clerical matters and unplanned events (e.g., pencil sharpening, passing papers, taking attendance, grading homework).

### ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Review with students the three main classroom rules.

Attractively display students' work to demonstrate that I value their academic efforts.

Face the class during small group lessons so that I can observe and monitor all classroom activities.

Regularly move around the room, visually scan the room, and keep continual tract of what is going on.

Give the students precise directions for assignments, including the time when the assignments are due, and when they will be corrected and returned.

### STUDENTS: GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS

Spend more time on whole class or group instruction and less on working alone with individual students for extended periods.

Plan and prepare structured materials so that students can work by themselves on specific academic tasks.

### CURRICULUM - CONTENT

Teach a math concept using manipulative materials, e.g., cuisinaire rods.

Teach three new words emphasizing word meanings, by using drill and practice, and illustrations.

Check the seatwork materials to be sure that they relate to the lesson.

## CURRICULUM - PROCESS

Ask questions to be sure students are clear about information in the lesson.

Direct my questions to children who do not often participate.

Determine if students need skills in following instruction, and will not automatically assume they know how.

Provide immediate response to the accuracy of a student's answers, guiding the student to the correct answer.

# YOUR PRAISE CAN SMOTHER LEARNING

by David L. Martin

In classrooms throughout the country, teachers are popping jellybeans into students' mouths for any conceivable reason: to reward correct answers, to encourage more answers, in response to incorrect answers, to reward the motivated students, to motivate the unmotivated; and perhaps most often, jellybeans are given on a random basis, out of habit, for no special reason at all. Tons of jellybeans are being dispensed and consumed. Having discovered this widespread use of candy in the classroom, a few researchers are asking pointed questions: Does the candy aid or disrupt learning? What effects does it have on children and what they learn, how they learn, and their attitudes about learning? Should it be used at all?

Farfetched, yes. But if you substitute praise for candy, this scenario is an accurate one, including the part about researchers who currently are studying praise as it's used by teachers. And what the researchers say they are finding is startling. Praise is used in massive amounts; praise is ineffective in helping children learn and can actually sabotage learning; praise can hook kids on external rewards and can weaken their self-motivation; praise is used to control low-achieving students; praise perpetuates unequal treatment based on race and ethnic background.

Praise? Are the researchers talking about common, everyday, run-of-the-classroom praise? "That's a good answer." "You did really well." "Good, good." "Oh, that's excellent." That type of praise?

Yes.

## How One Researcher Found Praise

In the 1960s, University of Florida professor Mary Budd Rowe tried to find out what variable could make children in elementary grade science programs develop the type of scientific inquiry into ideas and relationships that the courses were designed to provoke. A lot of things didn't seem to make a difference: science background of the teacher, type of science curriculum being used, size of class, age of child. What Rowe finally discovered to be the most effective variable in eliciting inquiry from students is something she calls "wait-time," which is the amount of time a teacher waits for an answer after posing a question (wait-time I) and the amount of time a teacher waits after student answers a question (wait-time II). Rowe found that when teachers stretched out their wait-times to an average of three seconds (instead of the overwhelmingly typical wait-times of one second or less), several things happened: students gave longer response and more unsolicited but appropriate responses; students' confidence in their responses increased; students' failure to respond decreased; students interacted and exchanged more information with each other; and students asked more questions. In other words, student performance improved, or at least there was an increase in the types of student actions that we often associate with improved performance.

But there was a wasp in the wait-time ointment: praise. While examining the different patterns of wait-times given to students in a class, Rowe found that teachers praise certain students more than others. She then went back to her data to see how and how much teachers praise. Rowe discovered that praise is "habituated" in the speech of many teachers, one out of every four words uttered in a classroom is a word of praise. Rowe also found that teachers' heavy praise of students sabotaged the beneficial effects of longer wait-times. "Thus," Rowe explained in a 1974 issue of the Journal of Research in Science Teaching, "we were forced to pay attention to rewards whether we wished to or not, since they frequently confounded the interpretation of the experiments, observations and those recordings are contained in reports she's written for the Journal of Research in Science Teaching and in her McGraw-Hill book, Teaching Science As Continuous Inquiry. What Rowe has uncovered is a stunning indictment of praise: it cuts into students' task persistence; it undermines students' confidence in their answers; it lowers the number of alternative explanations offered by students; and it cuts down on cooperation and exchanges among students.

## How Praise Gets in Learning's Way

One of Rowe's primary contentions is that heavy praise from teachers makes children more dependent on a system of extrinsic, rather than intrinsic, rewards. Constant praise "teaches" a child that reward will come from one external source (the teacher), and this interferes with a child's development of self-satisfaction from learning itself--from understanding new ideas of completing new tasks.

Rowe's speculation seems to be borne out in her experimental findings and in the work of other researchers, such as Martin L. Maehr and William M. Stallings of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. In a 1972 report published in Child Development, Maehr and Stallings said that their studies of eighth graders indicated that conditions in which students relied on internal evaluations (doing a task because it is fun or interesting to the student, for example) "seemed to spawn greater motivation to (continue) performance at difficult tasks." Students preferred to do easy tasks when they knew that their work was going to be evaluated by an external source (the teacher).

Heavily praised students have less confidence in their answers. Rowe maintains she found that students from high-praise classrooms (when compared with students in low-praise classrooms) did more of the following three actions, which Rowe infers are signs of students' lowered confidence: eye-checking with teachers, which Rowe says is done by students who are unsure of themselves and who are trying to confirm that what they are doing or saying is OK with the teacher; making responses in an inflected, self-doubting tone; and exhibiting low task persistence, which indicates to Rowe that students are unwilling to keep plugging at something in which they have little confidence.

In one of her experiments, second graders from inner-city schools were tested on how confident they would be in continuing to give explanations when Rowe's experimenters disagree with those explanations. The experimenters wanted to see how many students involved in the experiment precludes one from making generalizations. Rowe did find that most of the students from classrooms with a heavy praise schedule failed to survive two disagreements: five out of the ten students tested quit after the first disagreement. Most of the students from classrooms with a low schedule of praise survived all three disagreements.

Rowe suggests that students accustomed to high amounts of praise will not get involved in innovative or complex reasoning because they've been conditioned to go for a "quick payoff" of praise. When the primary reward system in a classroom is teacher praise (instead of the rewards of discovery, internal satisfaction, or even praise from peers), students also are less likely to share information with or to listen to other students. In one set of high-praise classrooms, Rowe found that students tended to guard results until the teacher asked for them. This behavior was especially pronounced in middle-class populations.

In a study of 30 classrooms, Rowe compared the students of the five teachers who praised the most with the students of the five teachers who praised the least. Here's what she discovered:

> The low reward schedule produced more student-student encounters. Task persistence is higher under the low schedule. Under the high schedule, the students tend to step at stages and call for the teacher. Thus, there is also a lot of waiting around for the teacher to reach them. The amount of spontaneous sharing of ideas between students is greater in the low reward condition. The number of alternative explanations and suggestions for new experiments favored the low reward group. Inflected responding was almost three times as frequent in the high reward group as in the low. . .

In some high-praise classrooms, Rowe found, students would "tease or mock" kids who had been praised; "This behavior was common in both suburban and ghetto groups but was especially pronounced in some ghetto classes." This negative peer pressure also was evident in a study done by Georgia M. Gabor, curriculum advisor for the San Marino School System in Pasadena, California. Gabor conducted two experiments with junior high school math classes; one experiment was with students from an "underprivileged, minority community, inner-city" school, and the other study was with students from a middle-class suburban school. Using the students' performance on a math test as her basis, Gabor sought to examine the effect of several variables, including two teaching methods, praise, reproof and no feedback. Before taking the math test, some students were praised for their performance on a previous test, some students were criticized for their past performance and some received no feedback. Gabor hypothesized that children who were praised would perform better than children who received no feedback from the teacher or who were criticized. She struck out on teaching methods and "no feedback"--those variables didn't seem to have a significant effect on performance. But, she wrote in a 1975 issue of the California Journal of Educational Research, "the effect of reproof and praise were highly significant in the studies." Gabor said that "reproof had a significantly facilitating effect" on the suburban students and that praise affected "performance of both sets of students very negatively."

Some of the suburban students in Gabor's experiment said that the praise made them over-confident and that they didn't concentrate on the test. And, as in Rowe's observations, some inner-city students "felt annoyed to irate about having had been praised in front of their peers."

## Whom Praise Hurts Most

In her testing samples, Rowe discovered that teachers praised students whom they rated as their "top five" differently than they praised students whom they rated as their "bottom five." The bottom five students, according to Rowe, were praised more and received more nonpertinent praise; teachers praised their top students for correct answers but they praised their bottom students for both correct and incorrect answers. For the students classified (by teachers) as much as 50 percent of the praise did not seem to be attached to correct responding. The bottom five generally receive(d) an ambiguous signal system.

This nonpertinent praise, according to another study, is the most disruptive type of praise. In a 1970 issue of the Journal of Research in Science Teaching, Francis X. Lawlor of Columbia University's Teachers College in New York described how he tested 191 second grade students (from a middle class, suburban school) on their ability to perform a simple sorting and grouping task. The children were split into groups that performed the task under different reward conditions: pertinent reward (praise for acceptable solutions), no reward (the experimenters quietly observed the children), and nonpertinent reward (children were praised on a "fixed time schedule"). Lawlor said that the nonpertinent reward condition "is most analogous to observed classroom practice." He looked at the second graders' performance in several areas (number of solutions, number of acceptable solutions, perseverance time, (for example) and this is what he found:

> The conclusion seems justified, on the basis of the data reported in this study, that the use of verbal rewards which are not congruent with behavior will result in less efficient problem-solving than either a neutral, no-reward situation, or the use of rewards which are congruent with the problem-solving behavior. The giving of rewards which are congruent improves the problem-solving efficiency of girls but not of boys.

It would seem that Lawlor's finding that pertinent reward can be helpful is in conflict with Rowe's conclusions, but she told Learning that it is not. Rowe has been studying more complex learning activities (inquiry into and exploration of ideas, for example), and the effect praise has on this type of learning is vastly different from the effect praise has on the type of simple task that Lawlor's subjects were performing (he said the tasks "were of low conceptual complexity").

Some studies, Lawlor's included, seem to indicate that praise has a different effect on girls than it does on boys. Girls may be more tuned into or susceptible to praise, but this has not been proved, and Rowe says she is cautious about concluding that praise has a sexist effect.

Researchers from Stanford University's School of Education are not, however, at all cautious about concluding that praise has a special--and negative--effect on minority-member students. Celestino Fernandez, Ruben W. Espinosa and Sanford M. Dornbusch questioned 770 San Francisco high school students about the students' attitudes toward school and opinions of their achievement in school. The researchers wanted to know what was perpetuating "the low academic status" of Chicano students. One of the leading culprits apparently is praise.

Chicano and black students responding to the questionnaire said they did think school was important, they did think they were working hard in school, and they did think they were doing O.K. in school. But these minority-member students were neither working hard nor doing well in school when compared with other students. Fernandez, Espinosa and Dornbusch said that the minority students' misperceptions were a product of a faulty evaluation system, which substituted teacher warmth and praise for challenging academic standards.

Excerpts from the Stanford report:

- Chicano and black students were the two groups with the lowest achievement levels, yet they were receiving the most academic praise.
- Teachers' failure to set challenging standards led Chicano students to a false view of their own level of effort and skill. Their faulty self-assessment helped perpetuate a pattern of institutional discrimination. The warm and positive acts of teachers led to the preservation of the existing structure of inequality.
- Chicanos and blacks, the ethnic groups who were doing less well in school, saw teachers as more friendly and warm than did the other ethnic groups. Most teachers are "Anglos," yet other white students (and Asian students) perceived teachers as less friendly and warm.
- Upon reflection, it is not surprising that receiving praise for work that is not very creditable leads to distorted images of the level of effort and achievement each student believes he or she is putting forth.

In their conclusion, the Stanford researchers say they are not blaming teachers (who are trying to be responsive to students) but that they are revealing "institutional discrimination in which the agents of discrimination, the teachers, are warm and positive in their relations with their students, and the students are deceived about their current position and their destiny."

## How Not To Praise

All these findings about praise are, to say the least, unsettling. And they're confusing, too. In our minds we may link praising students with helping and being supportive of them. There also seems to be a conflict between what behavior modification studies conclude about the effectiveness of positive reinforcement (praise) and what the research cited in this article says about praise. But no conflict, in fact, exists. Rowe's work concentrates on praise's effect on inquiry, exploration of new ideas, investigation into relationships. She points out that praise for simpler tasks or for drills (multiplication tables, for example) or for acceptable social behavior is or can be effective. (The Lawlor study indicates that even for simpler tasks, praise must be pertinent.) The decision to praise or not to praise, therefore, probably should be based on the type of learning students are engaged in: if it's simple or rote learning, praise (or jellybeans, for that matter) probably will work. For more in-depth learning, neither praise nor candy is likely to be effective.

Here are some ways to determine if you praise heavily, and if you do, how to stop.

1. Make tape recordings of your exchanges with students. While listening to these tapes, count the number of verbal rewards you hand out. Do words like "good" and "excellent" and "fine" constantly pop up in your speech? Do you seem to be giving more praise to low-achieving students? Is the praise you give low-achieving students less pertinent or accurate than the praise you give high-achieving students? Watch your students for other actions which may indicate that you (rather than the students or learning itself) have become the sole and central source of reward in your classroom: students do not share information with each other, they answer you in a questioning tone, give short and incomplete answers, watch you constantly, and seem extremely eager (jumping up and down, frantically waving their arms) to get your attention and to give answers to you.

2. If praise does seem to be a main ingredient in your classroom, try to slow down your pace. Be silent more often. Give kids a chance to answer questions and a chance to follow up on their answers. (Rowe has found that most teachers give wait-times of one second or less.) Heavy praise simply may be an unconscious part of your speech. You might, for example, say "good, good" after a student's answer in much the same way each of us says "uh, uh" when we pause during our conversations. One way to break this praise-speech habit (and to lengthen wait-times as well) is simply to be silent after you ask a question and after a student answers your question. Effective wait-times begin at three seconds.

3. Do not always be the one who sets goals and tasks for students; encourage them to set their own goals and to determine their own tasks: Encourage them to set goals for themselves that are not easily reached. Some studies have shown that students who work toward their own specific difficult goals accomplish more and build more self-motivation than do students who work toward goals that have been set by an external source and that are rather easy to meet. The Stanford research study notes that praise or teacher friendliness alone is not effective in helping children maximize their efforts; challenging standards must be set.

Maryann Gatheral, supervisor of teacher education at the University of California at Davis, sees heavy praise as a symptom of poor teaching techniques. Gatheral says that an effective teacher can convey a positive attitude without using words of praise (which she calls "flattery"). Gatheral also speculates that teachers who criticize heavily need praise as a counter-balance, and if the criticism stops, so will the praise. Rowe would argue that both types of external evaluations (praise and criticism) get in learning's way.

Here is some of Gatheral's advice for teaching without flattery:

- In response to a student's answer or comments, be specific and put the focus on the material being covered or on other students--or just look at the student and wait for him to elaborate or for other students to chime in. Ask another question. Ask about the topic being discussed. Ask, "How does that relate to what we're talking about?" Ask another student, "What do you think of this answer?" These questions won't come across as put-downs, Gatheral says, if the teacher's tone and attitude is supportive.

- If a student gives a correct answer and you feel compelled to praise (**maybe** the answer was especially insightful or perhaps this specific **student** usually doesn't answer correctly or at all), make these kinds of comments: "That's getting us someplace." Or: "That gives some depth to our conversation." Gatheral says, however, that in a classroom with a positive tone, and in which students know it is safe to respond, the teacher probably won't "feel compelled" to praise.

- If a student makes a response that is completely off the track, a teacher can say, "I don't understand what you're getting at." Or: "What facts do you have to back that up?" (Again, the teacher's supportive attitude is the key to making these types of questions non-threatening to students.) The teacher can pick up on specific parts of the student's remark:

  Teacher: "You say witches are bad. Why?"

  Student: "Because they're ugly."

  Teacher: "Is ugliness bad? Can you be ugly and good? Does anyone know of a person who is ugly and good?"

Gatheral says that this type of response to a "wrong" answer teaches a child that he must have reasons to support his opinions. When children can't support their contentions, the incorrectness becomes obvious to them--the judgment does not have to come from the teacher.

- Praise should not be used to encourage reluctant students to participate in classroom discussions, says Gatheral. Instead, she suggests, a teacher, in circulating around the classroom, should talk casually and privately with the reluctant student. Get him accustomed to talking, to making comments, to sharing his opinions. Choose topics (in your private conversations with the reluctant student and in classroom conversations) that interest him. Keep getting to him in this private, casual, non-threatening way, Gatheral says, and don't attempt to praise him into responding.

No one is suggesting that you never, ever again utter a word of praise during classroom exchanges with your students. But you and your students will be better off if you do not praise heavily, inaccurately or habitually. And it does seem that some types of praising are more disruptive than others. Gatheral argues that praise may not be so harmful if it is based on specific, clear and well-understood standards. If you praise a student for not being noisy, say: "You're doing a good job of being quiet and that'll help us finish our discussion." Do not say: "You're being a good student."

Mary Budd Rowe makes a similar point: Praise of tasks, when it is specific and detailed, is not as disruptive as generalized praise of persons. If you tell a student, "That's good that you've set up this experiment in a new way," then other students know what is being praised and can even attempt to duplicate the praised task. Non-praised students have less of an idea what is praiseworthy and can become resentful when teachers praise persons ("You're a good experimenter.") or when teachers use praise in other unclear and nonspecific ways: "Good. Good." Or: "That's an excellent job!" (Does everyone know what is being praised and why it's excellent?)

If you manage to stop praising students and then find that the urge to praise is building up inside you and that you absolutely must relieve the pressure by praising someone, lay it on your colleagues. Overt, heavy, person-oriented praise has not yet been found to have deleterious effects on teachers.

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### TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS: THE DEGREE OF PROFICIENCY ATTAINED IN KNOWLEDGE, SKILL AND APPLICATION DETERMINED BY THE FIVE STEPS OF THE TRAINING DESIGN

| | | THE TRAINING STAGES | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PERCENT OF IMPLEMENTATION | TRAINING STEPS | Knowledge Mastery | Skill Acquisition | Classroom Application |
| 5-10% | THEORY | Middle to high | low | very low |
| 10-15% | Theory Plus DEMONSTRATIONS | high | low to middle | very low |
| 20+% | Theory, demonstrations, plus PRACTICE and FEEDBACK | high | high | very low |
| | Theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, CURRICULUM ADAPTATION | high | high | low to middle |
| 80-90% | Theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, curriculum adaptation, plus COACHING | high | high | high |
| | All of the above with PERIODIC REVIEW | high | high | high |

Note: the degree of proficiency attained as indicated by LOW, MIDDLE, or HIGH

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